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Santa reckless role model: Expert

RESEARCH Yes, Virginia, there really is a Santa Claus. And he's a public health menace.

Public health expert Nathan Grills of Monash University in Australia says the beloved Christmas icon should ditch his sleigh and start biking or walking to lose his jelly belly.

Grills' light-hearted research was published online Thursday in the annual Christmas issue of the British medical journal BMJ.

After conducting a literature review, Grills identified a "very high Santa awareness" among children. He determined Santa made a reckless role model, noting his frequent cookie snacks, occasional cigars and refusal to don a helmet during "extreme sports such as roof surfing and chimney jumping."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News on the Move
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Style pg 41

Blue cool for 2010

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Holidays **Festival of lights**

ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper takes part in a menorah lighting ceremony, celebrating the Jewish festival of Hanukkah in Ottawa yesterday.

New Year's funding?

Council expects rapid transit announcement in January

TIM WIECLAWSKI
tim.wieclawski@metronews.ca

Ottawa residents can expect to learn whether or not there will be money for the city's rapid transit plan by the end of January.

By a vote of 7-1, the city's transit committee approved the route for the $2.1-billion first portion of the rapid transit network — including the locations for the downtown transit tunnel stations — yesterday.

The University of Ottawa, the Preston BIA and the Downtown Coalition all urged the committee to approve the proposed 12.5-kilometre electric light rail route, which runs from Tunney's Pasture to Blair Station through a 3.2-kilometre downtown tunnel.

If approved by city council Jan. 13, funding announcements from the federal and provincial governments are expected to follow shortly after, according to the timeline by city staff.

"We built our critical path around a funding announcement at the end of January," said deputy city manager Nancy Schepers.

Once the announcement is made, an expedited environmental assessment would begin. That would have to be signed off by Ontario's environment minister before the end of May. The tunnel is not expected to be completed until 2016.

A funding announcement in January is not a hard deadline, said Schepers. If it doesn't come by then, council will have to start considering a revised timeline.

But at some point, the taxpayers of Ottawa "deserve an answer from the federal and provincial governments," said transit committee chairman Alex Cullen.

McGuinty won't rule out sale of Crown assets to trim deficit

Hiring two banks to review Crown assets such as Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario will ensure taxpayers get maximum value and doesn't necessarily mean any agencies will be sold to trim the $24.7-billion deficit, Premier Dalton McGuinty said yesterday.

McGuinty also dismissed suggestions that just musing about selling off Ontario's electricity assets would frighten people who are afraid of seeing their basic utilities owned by for-profit corporations.

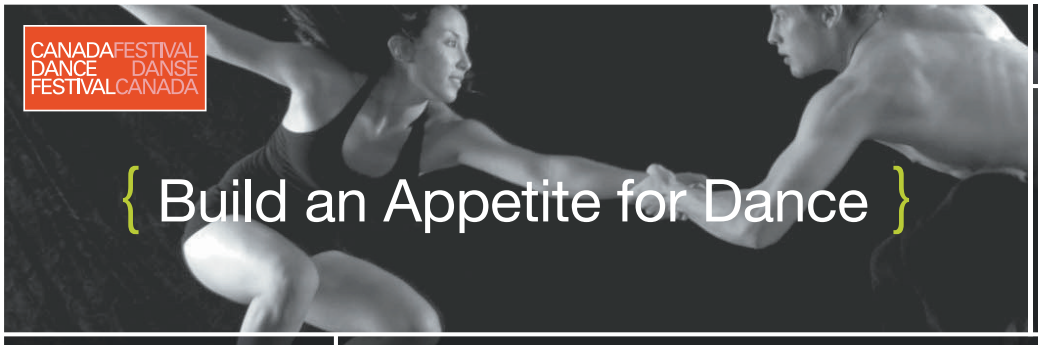
"I'm not scaring anybody, and I don't know if anybody here wants to scare anybody," he said, looking at the media.

Despite criticizing previous Progressive Conservative governments for trying to privatize electricity, McGuinty wouldn't rule out a sale of Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation or any other Crown corporation.

"We've got a responsibility to take a look at all of our assets to make sure we're getting the best bang for our buck," he told reporters prior to a cabinet meeting.

"There has been an important, unprecedented, unforeseen, intervening event; the biggest global economic recession in 80 years," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Local

Downhill delights open for season

Let the fun begin — the City of Ottawa opened its 50 approved toboggan hills earlier this week. Outdoors enthusiasts are invited to sled while weather and hill conditions permit. While the most popular hills include ones located at Mooney's Bay, Vincent Massey Park, Walter Baker Park, the Arboretum, Bruce Pit, Conroy Pit and the Green's Creek Conservation Area, a full list of hills and safety tips are available on the city's website. METRO OTTAWA

METRO INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 2009 Festival of Media Awards

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News in brief

RIDE PROGRAM Over the next few weeks, Ottawa police are stepping up their RIDE program to help reduce impaired driving on city roads. Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere checkpoints will be set up throughout the city at various times throughout the holiday season. METRO OTTAWA

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What's online today.

Video Wind Mobile makes its Canadian debut, undercutting the big three carriers and doing away with contracts at **metronews.ca/canada**

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Kids get to shop with a cop

Event pairs up deserving youth, officers on holiday spree

TRACEY TONG
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Earlier this year, Tyson Nauyuq was critically injured in a hunting accident.

The eight-year-old, who is a resident of Pangnirtung, Nunavut, wasn't expected to survive. But with the treatment he's been getting at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, he's on his way to recovery.

While he's seen little of Ottawa since he got here in August, Nauyuq got a treat yesterday when he — and about 30 other children — went on a shopping spree.

Armed with Christmas wish lists, 33 children from the national capital area were paired with 33 Ottawa police officers — who volunteered their time to act as personal shoppers — for the second annual CopShop event in Ottawa.

The Billings Bridge Shopping Centre supplied each of the children with a $200 gift card, so that the participants — chosen by community groups and police because of need, or in recognition of academic, sports or volunteer achievements — could do their Christmas shopping.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Twelve-year-old Courtney Everson finds a shopping buddy in Ottawa police Const. Jennifer Finniss at the Billings Bridge Shopping Centre yesterday. Thirty-three local police officers volunteered their time to be paired with 33 local children through CopShop, a program that has become a holiday tradition across Canada.

"They're deserving kids who have done good things through their community," said Const. Walter Duhme. "This is a way of rewarding them for what they have given through their communities."

"There are so many deserving children out there who may not otherwise get to celebrate Christmas," said Greta Bloskie, marketing director at Billings Bridge.

When asked who he was shopping for, 10-year-old Dylan Nicolitisis pulled out a list and studied it.

"My brother, my baby brother and my mom," he said. He also had a few things for himself on the list, including a walkie-talkie, a big colouring book and some crayons.

Nicolitisis' shopping buddy Const. Jon Trudeau was hoping that this event would give kids "a different perspective on police officers, and put them in a positive light."

"You want to make sure you leave impressions on everyone, especially young kids," agreed Duhme. "They'll know that if they ever need an officer, they can trust us and call us at any time."

Suspect sought in bank theft may be stained with red dye

Ottawa police are seeking the public's assistance in identifying a man after a west-end bank was robbed Tuesday.

At 5:15 p.m., a lone male entered a TD Canada Trust branch in the 1400 block of Richmond Road. The suspect passed a note making a demand for cash. A small amount of cash, along with a dye pack was taken.

There were no injuries.

Police are seeking a white male, five feet, 11 inches tall, between 40 and 50 years of age with salt and pepper hair, grey stubble and a medium build. He may have had a small bandage on the right side of his face and may be stained with red ink from the dye pack. Anyone with information on this is asked to contact the Ottawa police at 613-236-1222, ext. 5116 or Crime Stoppers at 613-233-8477 (TIPS).

SUBMITTED

Suspect in Tuesday's robbery.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Tunnel dig: Three years for 3.2 km

TRANSIT It will take up to three years to complete the 3.2-kilometre transit tunnel through Ottawa's downtown.

Most of the $735-million tunnel from Bronson Avenue and Campus Station will be dug out by a tunnel-boring machine.

The machine would likely be launched from the parking lot north of Scott Street and the tunnel liners could be fed in from that site. It would also be a temporary dump site for rock removed from the tunnel.

"There would be a fairly high level of activity in that area for likely two and half to three years for the construction of the tunnel and the underground stations," said project manager David Hopper, an engineer from Delcan Corp.

The machine digs its hole like an earthworm, explains Hopper. It uses jacks to eat into the rock about 1.5 metres at a time and pushes crushed rock out of the tunnel on a conveyor. Depending on the type of rock, the machine could dig up to 10 metres per day.

As the boring machine plods forward, concrete liner rings are installed in the newly dug out sections, essentially creating a completed tunnel along the way.

Although the tunnel is being built 30 metres below ground to minimize impact on utilities and building foundations along the route, Hopper said there will be some surface work done to build ventilation for the stations.

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

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Bon Appetit tickets now on sale

Tickets for one of Ottawa's premiere gourmet events are now available. Held May 4 at Lansdowne Park, Bon Appetit Ottawa is a fundraiser for 23 local charities like the Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa, the OCRI School Breakfast Program and the Hospice at May Court. METRO OTTAWA

Budgets ignored at holidays

BEN GODBY
for Metro Ottawa

More than one-third of Canadians plan to spend less on gifts this holiday season than they did last year, while 44 per cent plan to spend about the same amount.

But in spite of the statistics — released in the recent TD Canada Trust Holiday Shopping Survey — international economic recession and the predictions of shoppers themselves, Ottawa shopping centres are experiencing traffic that may very well be better than last year.

"This season has been fantastic," said Cindy VanBuskirk, general manager of the Rideau Centre. "Traffic has been up four to seven per cent every week since November."

Denis Pelletier, general manager of Bayshore Shopping Centre, agreed. "What we're seeing is a traditional Christmas shopping season," he said.

Shoppers' habits may be to blame for their inability to hold stricter budgets in a year of recession. The survey found that although most Canadians set a budget for buying gifts, only one in five people stick to it.

"Thirty-two per cent of Canadians say they spend between 10 per cent and 50 per cent more than they budgeted for during the holidays," said Carrie Russell, senior vice-president, core banking and payments, TD Canada Trust.

Barrhaven shopper Steve Oliver believes that better prices are behind the spending spree.

"I think everybody's just out looking for a deal," he said.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Volunteer Ottawa's Tracy Lewis wraps presents at the Billings Bridge Shopping Centre yesterday.

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Home ownership spike raises vacancy rates

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

APARTMENTS More people making the leap into the home ownership market in 2009 has increased Ottawa's apartment vacancy rate, an annual report released yesterday by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation stated.

Ottawa's vacancy rate for private rental apartments increased to 1.5 per cent in October 2009, up from 1.4 per cent the same time last year, a rental market report for the Ottawa area said.

"Low borrowing costs coupled with steady employment conditions in the capital city gave many renters the right incentives to jump into the home-ownership market, pushing the vacancy upwards," said Sandra Pérez Torres, CMHC housing market analyst for the Ottawa area.

Trend

- The trend in Ottawa was one seen across Ontario, where the vacancy rate for all apartment types — particularly for bachelor suites — rose from 2.7 per cent in 2008 to 3.5 per cent in October 2009.

Compounding the incentive from low borrowing costs, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment increased by 2.9 per cent from last year's average, the report said.

But at the same time, minimal rental apartment construction and fewer secondary rental market units kept vacancies low, Pérez Torres said.

"While both influences roughly balanced each other out, the outflow of households from rental accommodations into home-ownership was relatively stronger," said Pérez Torres.

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Canada

Colvin blasts Tories in letter to Commons

New allegations in Afghan torture debate

Canada stubbornly refused to monitor Afghan prisoners, some of whom disappeared into unofficial "black site" jails, until public attention left it no choice, diplomat Richard Colvin claims in a stinging letter filed with a House of Commons committee.

The 16-page, point-by-point critique of testimony and public claims by federal officials is laced with several new allegations that will no doubt feed the political wildfire burning over the prison torture issue.

The intent of the letter, delivered yesterday to the special committee on Afghanistan, was to rebut critics who've tried to tear apart his claims of abuse in Afghan jails and what Canada knew about it.

On April 24, 2007 — one day after allegations of torture were published in Canada — the Canadian Embassy in Kabul recommended a system to monitor prisoners, Colvin wrote.

But the advice was rejected by the senior federal official in charge of the Afghan file, David Mulroney, who is now the ambassador to China.

"In our one page memo, we suggested that Canada should negotiate a new detainee (memorandum of understanding), set up an effective monitoring mechanism, and try to reduce the number of detainees taken," says Colvin's letter.

"Mr. Mulroney replied within hours to reject our advice, instructing us instead to implement the contingency plan."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Outcry

- The public outcry over the torture allegations forced the Conservative government to sign a new, stricter deal with the Afghan government on May 3, 2007.

Wildrose growing fast in Alberta

POLITICS Danielle Smith was five months old when Peter Lougheed toppled a dynasty in 1971 and created one of his own.

Thirty-eight years later, Smith, the new leader of Alberta's Wildrose Alliance, is looking ahead to 2010. Recent polls have the Wildrose surging past Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach's Progressive Conservatives as the party of choice among the majority of voters. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SCANLIFE
Naomi Klein's No Logo and Cormac McCarthy's The Road listed among Canadian authors' favourite books of the decade. Scan this barcode for the full article.

Ontario **Survivor carries the flame**

PETER REDMAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sixteen-year-old Jack Prins, a survivor of childhood cancer and spokesperson for the Sick Kids Foundation, runs the final 300 metres to light the cauldron as the Olympic torch relay arrives in Lindsay, Ont., yesterday.

PM to join climate talks today

Go Green

DENMARK Violent protests and deadlocked talks await Prime Minister Stephen Harper in Copenhagen as climate negotiations threaten to unravel in their final hours.

Harper will join 192 other world leaders today at the United Nations conference in an effort to seal some kind of a deal.

But with scant few hours until the summit's close, the chasm between countries rich and poor seemed wider than ever.

Outside the convention hall, police battered a throng of protesters with batons as they tried to disrupt the conference. Videos showed protesters getting pepper-sprayed — and one pushed from the roof of a van — as they approached police lines.

Talks dragged on into the wee hours of the morning yesterday without a breakthrough, as China and the United States remained at loggerheads over key issues.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Arrest made in murder case from 1970
Police in Kingston, Ont., have arrested a Winnipeg man in a decades-old murder case. Joseph Clifford Edward Langford, 66, has been charged with non-capital murder. Police say Langford is accused in the death of Kingston resident Marshall Augustus Matier, 64, whose body was found behind a building on July 22, 1970. THE CANADIAN PRESS

87 cancer test errors found: Study

Irregularities led to improper treatment

A new study says nearly 40 Quebec women with breast cancer received improper treatment since last year because of testing irregularities — and five of them died.

The provincial study arrived yesterday as a followup to a report that cited problems with Quebec's screening practices.

Quebec Health Minister Yves Bolduc ordered the review in June.

He asked for thousands of cancer tests to be redone after an extensive study suggested there were problems with Quebec's screening process.

The original study by Dr. Louis Gaboury, head of the Quebec Association of Pathologists, examined almost 3,000 breast-cancer tests conducted over 14 months starting in April 2008.

Out of 2,856 exams reviewed, 87 errors were found in the test results.

"Our laboratories are of a very high quality. Our results in pathology, in Quebec, are world-class."
Yves Bolduc, Quebec health minister

The new provincial study, released yesterday, confirms 39 cancer sufferers failed to receive the proper care.

Bolduc said there was no proof the five deaths were caused by improper treatment. He said that mortality rate was normal for cases of breast cancer.

The health minister also defended the quality of breast-cancer tests in Quebec, saying the error rate fell well below what he described as the 10 per cent norm for such screening.

"Our laboratories are of a very high quality," the minister said. "Our results in pathology, in Quebec, are world-class."

The government says that test results can vary as much as 20 per cent from one lab to another.

Bolduc declined, however, to explicitly rule out the possibility that insufficient care might have caused any of the deaths. He said the families of the five victims are being contacted.

Quebec's College of Physicians said it was satisfied with the government's handling of the issue.

In North America, one woman dies from breast cancer every 12 minutes.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vancouver **Anti-Olympic mural**

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A man walks past an anti-Olympic mural hanging on the outside of a gallery in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, B.C., yesterday. The mural re-appeared this week after the city ordered its removal earlier in December.

Seeking Olympic families

GAMES Hundreds of mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters will be in Vancouver cheering on Canada's Olympians at the 2010 Winter Games.

Petro-Canada is looking for a couple of families to tell their stories.

Through Petro-Canada's Family Correspondent contest, two individuals, along with a family member each, will be chosen to go to Vancouver where they'll chronicle the activities of athletes' families via Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

Contestants must submit a 30-second video to facebook.com/dreambig.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tories have a 6-point lead: Poll

POLITICS A new poll suggests Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservatives are maintaining a six-point lead over the Liberals, despite facing daily fire over their handling of the Afghanistan detainee issue.

The survey by The Canadian Press Harris-Decima, indicates support for the Conservatives stands at 34 per cent nationally, compared to 28 per cent for the Liberals, 14 for the NDP and 13 for the Greens.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

AIR INDIA The final report from the federal inquiry into the 1985 Air India bombing that killed 329 people is complete, and should be released early next year. The commission says the report will be published in five volumes totalling more than 3,000 pages.

KHADR Canadian Omar Khadr will be among about 100 Guantanamo detainees who U.S. officials say will be transferred to a prison in rural Illinois, but his lawyers say they aren't celebrating. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Swine flu may haunt us for years, officials say

The H1N1 influenza virus (swine flu) could keep coming back for "years to decades" and Nova Scotia officials warned yesterday they are looking at the possibility of mass-immunizations becoming an annual event. **METRO CANADA**

Quebec Premier Jean Charest warns provinces could ignore a federal climate deal.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Charest gets real on climate

Quebec Premier Jean Charest injected some "hard reality" into the climate discussion yesterday.

He warned that any deal the federal government concludes at the Copenhagen climate talks could ultimately be ignored by the provinces if it's deemed too weak.

While Canada might put its signature to an accord in Copenhagen, it would mean little if the provinces disagree with Ottawa's plan, Charest said at the UN conference yesterday.

Some provinces have been sharply critical of Ottawa's plan and say the federal government has ignored their calls to toughen what they call weak emission-reduction targets.

"In Copenhagen, the federal government has the power to sign treaties, but it doesn't have the power to bind provincial governments to them," Charest said.

"That's the Canadian reality, and it's a hard reality," he added.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada's gang czar gets 30 years

CRIME A man who parlayed a group of rough friends, a disdain for the Hells Angels and what prosecutors describe as "laudable organizational skills" into one of Canada's most notorious gangs has been sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Clay Roueche appeared yesterday for sentencing before U.S. District Judge Robert Lasnik in Seattle.

Prosecutors had requested 30 years for Roueche, who pleaded guilty to drug and money laundering conspiracy charges last spring.

The judge said he was convinced Rouche "took orders from no one" in his position atop the violent United Nations gang — so called because it welcomed all nationalities.

Prosecutors say he used a network of helicopters, planes, semi-trucks and other methods to move many tonnes of marijuana and cocaine and millions of dollars through Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mitten program a hands-down hit

OLYMPICS The call for a show of hands in support of Canadian athletes appears to have worked.

A million pairs of red mittens have been sold, ensuring a program to help Canadians win medals at the 2010 Games will stay in the black.

Own The Podium is a five-year, $117-million program funded by Olympic organizers and federal and provincial governments.

The economic downturn saw Ottawa increase its funding share .

But the runaway success of mitten sales means organizers will make good on their $44 million target. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Chihuahua surplus blamed on celebrities 9

Chihuahuas make up 30 per cent or more of the dog populations at many California shelters. And experts say pop culture is to blame, with fans imitating chihuahua-toting celebrities like Paris Hilton and Miley Cyrus, then abandoning the dogs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Talks deadlocked, protests flare

Go Green

Police fired pepper spray and beat protesters with batons outside the UN climate conference yesterday, as disputes inside left major issues unresolved just two days before world leaders hope to sign a historic agreement to fight global warming.

THIBAULT CAMUS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Danish riot police use pepper spray on protesters outside the UN climate conference in Copenhagen yesterday.

Hundreds of protesters were trying to disrupt the 193-country conference, the latest action in days of demonstrations to demand "climate justice" — firm steps to combat global warming. Police said 230 protesters were detained.

Inside the convention hall, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez echoed the protesters' sentiments: "If the climate was a bank, a capitalist bank, they would have saved it."

Earlier, negotiators dealing with core issues debated until just before dawn without setting new goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions or for financing poorer countries' efforts to cope with coming climate change, key elements of any deal.

In those overnight talks, the American delegation apparently objected to a proposed text it felt might bind the U.S. prematurely to reducing greenhouse gas emissions before Congress acts. U.S. envoys insisted, for example, on replacing the word "shall" with the conditional "should."

The Copenhagen talks so far have been marked by sharp disagreements between China and the U.S., and between rich and poor nations. Still unresolved are the questions of emissions targets for industrial countries, billions of dollars a year in funding for poor countries to contend with global warming, and verifying the actions of emerging powers like China to ensure that promises are kept.

Addressing the full conference for the European Union, Swedish Environment Minister Andreas Carlgren, urged the U.S. and China to raise their emissions-reduction targets.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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SCANLIFE

Scan this barcode for a daily video report from Copenhagen, or watch it at metronews.ca/world

Dozens of needles found inside boy

BRAZIL A two-year-old boy has as many as 50 metal sewing needles inside his body and a doctor treating the boy said yesterday they were apparently stuck there one by one.

Dr. Luiz Cesar Soltoski told The Associated Press that surgeons hope to remove most of the needles — some as long as five centimetres — but because some are stuck in his lungs, they have to wait until the child's breathing improves.

Some cannot be removed; they are too close to vital organs or actually inside them, Soltoski said.

AGENCIA O GLOBO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An X-ray shows the needles inside the boy.

The boy's mother brought him to a hospital in the city of Ibotirama on Thursday, saying he was complaining of pain.

The mother told police she doesn't know how the needles got inside her son, but police have opened an investigation.

Soltoski said he believes the needles were stuck into his body one by one because it would have been impossible for him to swallow them.

The boy is in intensive care, but Soltoski said his condition has improved since he was admitted.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

TEHRAN Iran yesterday test-fired an upgraded version of its most advanced missile, which is capable of hitting Israel and parts of Europe, in a new show of strength aimed at preventing a military strike against it amid the nuclear standoff with the West. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Canadian Christmas
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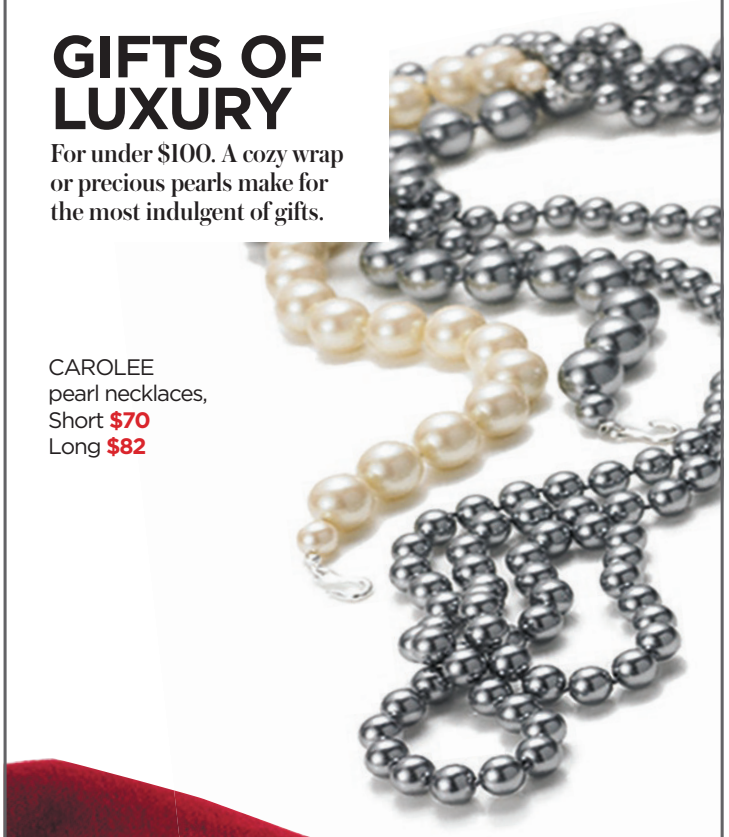

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the Bay

Taliban to release video of captured U.S. soldier

The Taliban have announced they will release a new video of an unnamed U.S. soldier captured in Afghanistan. The only U.S. soldier known to be in captivity is Pfc. Bowe Bergdahl of Hailey, Idaho, who disappeared more than five months ago in Afghanistan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deadly year for journalists

The November massacre of 30 media workers in the Philippines made 2009 the deadliest year ever for journalists, according to a report to be released today.

The Committee to Protect Journalists, an independent press advocacy group, says at least 68 journalists were killed in 2009, a 60 per cent increase over 2008 when 42 deaths were recorded.

68 The number of journalists killed worldwide in 2009, the most ever. Three-quarters were killed deliberately for their work, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

"What stands out is that three quarters are killed deliberately for their work, and in 85 per cent of these cases no one is brought to justice," CPJ Deputy Director Robert Mahoney said in a telephone interview yesterday. "This has a poisonous effect on good journalism."

Until the November massacre in the Philippine province of Maguindanao, where 57 people including 30 journalists were killed, 2009 seemed likely to end with 38 killings — a lower death toll than the year before. The previous one-year record was in 2007, when 67 killings were recorded.

Mahoney said the latest figures still represented a disturbing trend, especially in Somalia where nine journalists were murdered and killed in combat situations.

Four journalists were also killed in Pakistan, making it the second most deadly country in 2009, followed by Russia where three were killed. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

the Bay

Chicago **Faith walks**

ANTHONY M. TORTORIELLO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Faith, a two-legged dog, walks on Chicago's Michigan Avenue. The dog has become an inspiration for people, including soldiers, as she travels around the U.S.

Tiger, Elin headed for divorce, reports say

FLORIDA Tiger Woods's wife is planning to divorce him after Christmas, a number of U.S. media outlets reported last night.

Photos this week show Elin Nordegren, 29, near the couple's home in Windermere, Fla., not wearing her wedding ring.

"She plans to leave Tiger," an unnamed source close to Nordegren told People magazine.

The media outlets all quoted unnamed sources, but they all pointed to the same thing: Divorce. ABC News also quoted a source as saying: "Divorce is 100 per cent on. She's not rushing to divorce, however. She wants all the dirty laundry to be out on the table before she signs anything."

The couple married in 2004 and have two children. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

News in brief

PAKISTAN Pakistan's top court struck down an amnesty that had protected U.S.-allied President Asif Ali Zardari from corruption charges, setting the stage for political turmoil at a time when America seeks a united front against militants along the Afghan border. The ruling yesterday was a major blow to the desperately unpopular Zardari and could mark the beginning of his downfall, analysts said. While he enjoys immunity from prosecution as president, Zardari's opponents now plan to challenge his eligibility to hold the post.

MIDDLE EAST The Palestine Liberation Organization indefinitely extended Mahmoud Abbas' term as Palestinian president yesterday and endorsed his refusal to negotiate with Israel unless it freezes all settlement construction. The decision, which was expected, nonetheless gave an important vote of confidence to the embattled president. Abbas' inability to reconcile with the rival Hamas movement or wrest any form of concession from Israel has hurt his popularity among many Palestinians. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Whites to be minority in U.S. in 2050: Report

Census projections revised

The estimated date when whites will no longer make up the majority of Americans has been pushed back by eight years, to 2050, because the recession and stricter immigration policies have slowed the flow of foreigners into the U.S.

U.S. Census Bureau projections released yesterday update last year's prediction that white children would become a minority in 2023 and the overall white population would follow in 2042. The earlier estimate did not take into account a drop in the number of people moving into the U.S. because of the economic crisis and the immigration policies imposed after the 9/11 attacks.

The United States has 308 million people today; Two-thirds are non-Hispanic whites.

The total population should climb to 399 million by 2050, under new projections, with whites making up 49.9 per cent of the population. Hispanics, currently 15 per cent, would rise to 28 per cent.

The projections are based on rates for births and deaths, and a scenario in which immigration continues its recent, slower pace of adding nearly one million people each year.

The point at which minority children become the majority is expected to have a similar delay of roughly eight years, moving from 2023 to 2031.

The population 85 and older is projected to more than triple by 2050, to 18.6 million.

The actual shift in demographics will be influenced by a host of factors that can't be accurately forecast, including economic recovery, cultural shifts, natural or man-made disasters, and changes to immigration rules. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

According to new projections by the U.S. Census Bureau, this is the expected makeup of the U.S. in 2050, when the population will be 399 million:

49.9% White
28% Hispanic
12.2% Black
6% Asian

Microsoft will let Europeans choose different web browser

ANTI-TRUST More than 100 million Europeans will get to select a web browser after Microsoft agreed to offer Internet users a choice to avoid fresh fine. The move could represent a thaw in long-standing tensions between the software company and the European Union.

The deal announced yesterday ends all current antitrust charges brought by EU regulators. Beginning in March, Microsoft Corp. will provide a pop-up screen to all European users of its Windows operating system, asking them to choose one or more of five major browsers — including Microsoft's Internet Explorer, Mozilla's Firefox, Google Inc.'s Chrome and Apple Inc.'s Safari — and seven smaller rivals.

The European Commission had argued that tying Internet Explorer to Windows (which is already installed on most computers) gave the browser an unfair advantage. Those charges have now been dropped.

In more than a decade of EU antitrust action, Microsoft has been fined $2.6 billion. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

BODY The body of an 87-year-old woman remained in a bed for up to eight months though caretakers paid daily visits to the house and kept it tidy, North Carolina authorities said yesterday. The cause of death is being investigated.

DECAPITATION Mexican prosecutors say the severed heads of six police investigators have been found in Durango state.

RAPE London police have charged two 10-year-old boys with the rape of an eight-year-old girl.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment

Work parties can unravel mysteries

Relating
Sofi Papamarko
metronews.ca/papamarko

A co-worker recently told me that he wasn't sure if I was an introvert or an extrovert. I replied that I was still trying to figure it out.

We're all social chameleons. The way we act around our colleagues is very different from the way we act around our friends. Due to prescribed expectations, we don't generally have the opportunity to get to know our co-workers until we're outside the restrictive office environment.

Enter: The office Christmas party.

At a recent holiday shindig for a company I freelance for, a buzzed colleague and I bonded over our mutual infatuation for music from the 1960s. I met the sparkling, chatty fiancée of a quiet co-worker. And I gaped in awe as a respectable higher-up dropped to his knees during Boney M's Rasputin and proceeded to entertain us with some scarily proficient Russian dance moves.

What. In. The. Heck?

Who are these people that we spend so many of our waking hours in the presence of? We know their names, their positions and what they eat for lunch, but their personal lives, preferences and real personalities are, for the most part, a mystery. That is until it's time to party!

"At parties, some people believe that the normal rules that govern the identities they have negotiated with one another are relaxed," explains social psychology Prof. William B. Swann. "The boss who is ordinarily chilly with her subordinates may feel that she can warm up, or co-workers who are normally competitive with one another may be persuaded to ignore this and try to relax and enjoy one another. Alcohol can exaggerate these tendencies by lowering social inhibition and making people more open to experimenting with identities that they would not dream of assuming while sober."

But mistletoe and tumblers of extra-special eggnog among co-workers is potentially problematic.

"The downside of suspending the identity negotiation process for parties is that it can be difficult to revert back to the original identity," says Swann. "This will be particularly true if the party atmosphere encourages us to reveal something that could poison a relationship (e.g., hostility or inappropriate attraction)."

True, you may never look at Janice from accounts receivable in the same way ever again (cheap drunk, opera hobbyist), but anything that reveals the humanity of those around us probably isn't such a bad thing.

Sofi Papamarko is a 20-something writer based in Toronto. Her heroes include Desmond Morris and Nancy Sinatra.

Views

What is Barbie wearing under her burka?

GlobalView
Mona Eltahawy
metronews.ca/globalview

Authenticity has never been Barbie the doll's strong suit. It's estimated that if she were lifesize, she would tip over because of the size of her breasts.

So I shouldn't be surprised that as part of the 500 international outfits designed to mark Barbie's 50th birthday — yes, she's that old but doesn't she look good for her age — "Muslim" Barbie is wearing a burka.

As a Muslim woman, I am sadly all too familiar with the media shorthand for "Muslim" and "woman," equalling Covered in Black Muslim Woman. This being Barbie though, the burka isn't in forbidding black. Italian designer Eliana Lorena, who made the outfits for an auction Sotheby's is holding to collect money for Save the Children, instead made Muslim Barbie's burka vermillion and lime green!

"What on Earth are little girls supposed to do with Burka Barbie?"

What will the Taliban say?

What on Earth are little girls supposed to do with Burka Barbie? More intriguingly, what is Barbie wearing under that lime green burka? I was at a loss until I came across an ad by German lingerie company Liaison Dangereuse.

A woman steps out of the shower into stilettos (because they're the first thing a woman wears after showering, of course). She stands nude at her mirror to apply makeup, followed by lingerie, on top of which she throws a burka (black, not lime green though). The clip ends with the tantalizing line "Sexiness for everyone. Everywhere."

That's more like the Barbie we've known for 50 years! So, are Burka Barbie and Liaison Dangereuse in some kind of marketing cahoots?

The final piece of the puzzle came when the BBC reported that on the Saudi religion channel Awtan TV women presenters are dressed from head to toe in a black niqab. (The burka has a mesh where the eyes are, the niqab leaves the eyes uncovered).

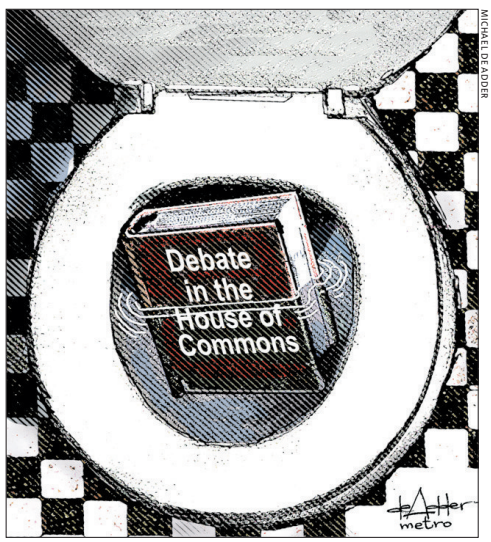
Eureka!

Those Burka Barbies must be spinoffs for those women presenters, one of whom told the BBC that wearing the niqab helps her to concentrate more on her work and what she looks like is irrelevant. It begs the question why she didn't choose radio instead, but, hey, I'm still trying to figure out this Burka Barbie business.

Apparently, fans of these women in black from head to toe — gloves included — urge them to stay just the way they are. Little did Ms. Lorena realize that she was actually supplying a demand most of us never knew existed — Burka Barbie TV Presenter!

I never was one for dolls.

Mona Eltahawy is an award-winning Egyptian-born commentator and public speaker on Arab and Muslim issues. She reported on the Middle East for 10 years before moving to the U.S.



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Playboy falls on NYSE over sale concerns

Playboy Enterprises Inc., owner of the namesake magazine, fell in New York Stock Exchange trading on concern that talks about a sale to Iconix Brand Group Inc. are collapsing. A sale of Playboy would mean an exit for founder and majority shareholder Hugh Hefner, 83. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business

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EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Carney: Don't get caught up in low rates

Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney issued a caution to Canadians and the chartered banks yesterday: Interest rates are going up and they should take care not to get caught out.

Expanding on previous warnings, the bank governor told a business audience in Toronto the current low interest rate environment may be luring Canadians to borrow too much, and banks to extend loans they will later regret.

Canadians have taken on more debt even during the recession, which is unusual, Carney said.

But while Canadians may be able to afford the added debt burden now when interest rates are at historic lows, they may get caught short when rates return to more normal levels.

> **"It is the responsibility of households now to ensure ... they can still service their debts."**
> Mark Carney, BoC governor

"The combination of sustained growth of household debt relative to income and a rising interest rate environment could increase the vulnerability of households to an adverse shock," he said in notes on the speech released by the central bank in Ottawa.

The bank governor did not say when he expects interest rates to start rising, although economists believe Carney will make his first move on his lower-bound 0.25 per cent policy rate in mid-2010. That would be after the bank's conditional commitment to stand still on the rate until the end of June.

It is not the first time Carney and the central bank have voiced such concerns, most recently last Thursday in the central bank's semi-annual Financial Systems Review, which cited household debt as the number 1 risk factor to Canada's economic well-being. Since then there has been more evidence that Canadians have not paid heed.

The Canadian Real Estate Association reported Tuesday Canadians continued to snap up houses at near-record levels, increasing their purchases of resale homes by 73 per cent in November.

Although the finances of Canadian households are still healthy the situation bears watching, Carney said.

"When risks are still manageable is precisely the best time to act," he said.

"It is the responsibility of households now to ensure that in the future, when the recovery takes hold and extraordinary measures are unwound, they can still service their debts."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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In brief

SUIT The U.S. Federal Trade Commission sued Intel Corp. yesterday looking to block pricing deals and other tactics the government said the world's biggest chip maker has used to snuff out competition. The FTC said Intel, which makes the microprocessors that run personal computers, has shut rivals out of the marketplace. In the process, the FTC said, Intel has deprived consumers of choice. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Northbound visits fell in fall

STAYING HOME Travel by United States residents to Canada fell 2.6 per cent between September and October to 1.6 million trips, the first decline in travel by Americans to Canada in four months.

Statistics Canada reports U.S. travellers made 943,000 overnight trips to Canada in October, down 2.7 per cent from September. The agency says same-day car travel by United States residents to Canada fell 2.3 per cent, its first decline in four months.

The number of overnight trips by travellers from countries other than the United States to Canada increased 3.2 per cent in October, the highest level in six months.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ShareYourViews
ottawaletters@metronews.ca

Wind Mobile blows into Canada

PHONE Wireless provider Wind Mobile launched its cellphone and data service yesterday, bringing a new player and more competition into the already hotly contested cellphone market.

Wind, owned by Yak long-distance provider Globalive, opened 18 outlets in the Toronto area, with plans to open more later this week in Calgary and in Vancouver, Ottawa and Edmonton in the new year.

The company is pinning its competitive hopes on contract-less price plans, which it says reflect what Canadians really want when they buy a cellphone. Wind charges full price for its handsets upfront.

Voice pricing plans range from $15 per month to $45.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SCANLIFE

Ireland is the latest country whose financial woes are provoking economic anxiety across the Euro-zone. Scan this barcode for the full article.

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Solar DIY **A bright idea**

GUS RUELAS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lowe's employees stock the first do-it-yourself home solar panel system by Andalay at a Lowe's in an L.A. suburb yesterday. The panels convert solar power into electricity that can be used to power a home. If the solar panels produce more electricity than what is needed to run a home, the excess can be sold to the local electric company.

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Sports

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ottawa's Ryan Shannon (26) shoots on Buffalo goaltender Ryan Miller as Craig Rivet looks on during first period action last night.

Injury-riddled Sens triumph

NHL RESULTS

Buffalo 0 Ottawa 2

VS

Brian Elliott made 22 saves and the Ottawa Senators defeated the Buffalo Sabres 2-0 last night despite playing with a depleted lineup.

Elliott, making his 13th straight start in the absence of the injured Pascal Leclaire, earned his second shutout in four games.

The Sabres who came into the game winners of their last four and eight of their last ten seemed to be caught off guard by the Senators, who compensated for their injuries with hard work.

Ottawa (17-12-4) took a 1-0 lead off Alexandre Picard's first-period goal and never let up. Mike Fisher, with his 15th, secured the win, scoring with just over one minute remaining.

The Senators will be playing with the makeshift lineup for a while as it appears Jason Spezza will miss significant time with his injury. Ottawa also missed winger Nick Foligno, who is out indefinitely with a lower body injury.

The absences forced Senators coach Cory Clouston to work on his juggling as he looked to fill some holes.

One of the more creative moves was having defenceman Chris Campoli, who had been a healthy scratch the last two games, play the wing.

The Senators' power play continued to struggle, going 0-for-3, although they did have some chances. Shannon had a shot catch the inside of the post and bounce right out early in the third.

Ottawa's penalty kill made up for it as the Sabres (20-10-2) were 0-for-6 with the man advantage.

The Senators took back-to-back minor penalties midway through the third, but kept Buffalo's chances to a minimum.

Ottawa's makeshift lineup will be tested as the Senators play four games in the next week.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

OTTAWA 2 Buffalo 0
Phoenix 6 Toronto 3
Carolina 5 Dallas 3
Florida 4 Atlanta 3
New Jersey 2 Montreal 1
N.Y. Islanders 2 N.Y. Rangers 1
Chicago 3 St. Louis 0
Anaheim at Vancouver

TODAY'S GAMES

Minnesota at Montreal
N.Y. Rangers at N.Y. Islanders
Pittsburgh at Philadelphia
Dallas at Atlanta
Phoenix at Columbus
Tampa Bay at Detroit
Los Angeles at Calgary
Nashville at Edmonton
Anaheim at San Jose

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Orlando 118 Toronto 99
Atlanta 110 Memphis 97
Cleveland 108 Philadelphia 101
Dallas 100 Oklahoma City 86
Indiana 101 Charlotte 98
L.A. Clippers 120 Minnesota 95
L.A. Lakers 107 Milwaukee 106 (OT)
New Orleans 95 Detroit 87
Utah 108 New Jersey 92
Houston at Denver
Washington at Sacramento
San Antonio at Golden State

TODAY'S GAMES

Orlando at Miami
New York at Chicago
Phoenix at Portland

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Spezza gone for 6-8 weeks

Sens' centre out with torn knee ligament

A trying start to the season just got a little more frustrating for Jason Spezza after he learned he'll miss the next six to eight weeks with a torn right knee ligament.

The Ottawa Senators revealed yesterday that they likely will be without their star centre until play resumes following February's Olympic break.

Spezza was hurt with 30 seconds remaining in Monday's 3-2 loss at Toronto when Maple Leafs forward Lee Stempniak fell on his right leg and an MRI Tuesday night discovered the tear.

"They're kind of giving me that as a timeline right now, but I'm just going to see how it goes and obviously try and get back a little sooner," Spezza said following the team's morning skate. "It's obviously disappointing and whenever you get hurt, it's never a good thing.

"I'm just looking forward now and trying to move forward and get better."

Now in his seventh NHL season, the 26-year-old was off to a slow start with just five goals and 14 assists in 30 games, and on pace for his worst offensive output since recording 21 points in 33 games as a rookie.

Spezza, who's eclipsed the 30-goal mark in three straight seasons and recorded at least 90 points in two of the past four years, went the first 10 games of the year without a goal and missed the next two contests with a back injury before finally notching his first goal of the season. He then went another nine games before scoring again.

With Spezza and his salary-cap hit of $7 million on the shelf and little room remaining under the cap to make a deal, the Senators are now left trying to fill the void internally.

Although his stats don't necessarily show it, his loss makes a big impact on the team's lineup.

"He plays 19 and a half, 20 minutes a game," Senators coach Cory Clouston said yesterday. "He draws attention, he opens up space. It's easy to say he hasn't played that well but he will be missed.

"We'll just have to make do and find ways to win." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jason Spezza

Sports in brief

OUTDOOR HOCKEY Even though the NHL's board of governors meetings didn't include discussion about expansion to Canada, the league is clearly looking at increasing its exposure in the country. Commissioner Gary Bettman says the NHL is looking to create a second outdoor game that will be played in Canada next season, potentially around CBC's Hockey Day in Canada in February.

BLUE JAYS The Roy Halladay blockbuster is now complete and the ace right-hander is no longer a Toronto Blue Jay. Halladay has been shipped off to the Philadelphia Phillies along with $6 million US in exchange for three prospects. The Blue Jays dealt one of the players — outfielder Michael Taylor — to the Oakland Athletics for infield prospect Brett Wallace. Staying with the Blue Jays are pitcher Kyle Drabek and catcher Travis d'Arnaud.

WOODS Tiger Woods has been voted Athlete of the Decade by members of The Associated Press, his 10 years of incomparable golf outweighing nearly three weeks of a salacious sex scandal. Woods received 56 of the 142 votes cast by AP member editors. More than half of the ballots were returned after his Nov. 27 car accident which set off the sensational tales of infidelity that have tarnished Woods' image.

SOCCER Frank Lampard scored a late penalty yesterday to give Chelsea a 2-1 win over last-place Portsmouth that restored its three-point lead at the top of the Premier League. Niko Kranjcar scored twice to help fifth-place Tottenham beat Manchester City 3-0 and hand its rival just a second league defeat, while Liverpool rose to sixth with a 2-1 win over Wigan.

RED SOX Pitcher John Lackey has finalized a five-year contract with the Boston Red Sox, a deal worth $80 million to $87.5 million US. One of the top pitchers in the free agent market, Lackey joins a strong rotation that includes right-hander Josh Beckett, and lefty Jon Lester.

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Galaxy, Donovan sign contract
The Los Angeles Galaxy announced yesterday that it has signed Landon Donovan to a new four-year contract. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bengal hurt after falling out of truck

Receiver 'apparently suffering life-threatening injuries'

Cincinnati Bengals receiver Chris Henry suffered serious injuries after falling out of the back of a pickup truck during a domestic dispute with his fiancée, police said yesterday.

Henry was found in the road in south Charlotte "apparently suffering life-threatening injuries," according to Charlotte-Mecklenburg police. Henry was transported to Carolinas Medical Center, the local trauma unit, but spokesman Scott White said he was not listed in hospital records and had no other information.

Police spokesman Robert Fey said officers were stationed near the 26-year-old Henry's hospital room. He had no information on Henry's condition, but said he was alive.

Police said a dispute began at a home just before noon and Henry jumped into the bed of the pickup truck as his unidentified fiancée was driving away from the residence.

"The domestic situation continued between the operator and Mr. Henry," the police said in a statement. "At some point while she was driving, Mr. Henry came out of the back of the vehicle."

Chris Henry

Henry was found on a residential street about a half mile away from the home when police were called to the scene after a medic report that a man was down.

Henry's agent, Kenneth Rush, did not immediately return phone and email messages. Fey wouldn't name the woman and said no charges would be filed yesterday.

Henry was away from the team after breaking his left forearm during a win over Baltimore on Nov. 8. He had surgery and was placed on season-ending injured reserve. Charlotte is home to his fiancée's parents, the Bengals said.

Team spokesman Jack Brennan said he had little information other than Henry was badly hurt.

"We are aware he was in an accident and that his injuries are very serious," Brennan said. "We are obviously staying in touch with the situation and are ready to offer whatever assistance we can."

Henry is in the final year of his contract with the Bengals, who let him go after his fifth arrest following the 2007 season. Owner Mike Brown then brought him back a few months later, signing him to a two-year deal, and Henry had stayed out of trouble since his return. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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HOLIDAY

Shopping Guide

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

Sweet treats

From gifts for the music lover to suggestions for teens and tweens, our 18-page Holiday Shopping Guide brings you all the ideas you need.

Next week's lineup

GIFT GUIDES For suggestions on what to buy if you've put off your holiday shopping, pick up Metro's next two Holiday Shopping Guides on Dec. 21 and Dec. 23.

Tech Pg 24

The coolest gadgets for all on your list.

Beauty Pg 36

The year's best beauty products for her.

8 shopping days — including today! — remain before Christmas.

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Holiday Shopping Guide

5 great gadget gifts

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

Sometimes gadgets go beyond simple necessity and actually inspire the imagination with their creativity, practicality or cleverness. After all, what is great technology if not the truest example of human ingenuity?

Here are some of this year's coolest gadgets:

Savant
starts at $6,100

Remember all that talk years ago about being able to control things like the stove and air conditioner in all parts of your home remotely? Well, it looks like that reality is finally more than hot air — behold the Savant, a unified console that can link to your wireless Apple device and lets you control all the important stuff in your home from one place, or even anywhere in the world. Yes, you can whip out your iPhone in Paris to turn down the heating in your empty Canadian condo. Pull up a picture of a particular room in your home and control things in that specific room like lights, security systems and even your stereo system remotely. It's not cheap, but for the people drooling over it, price will probably be no obstacle to getting this thing.

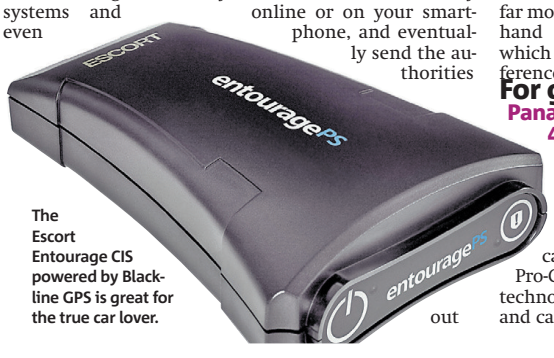
The Savant is a unified console that you can link to your wireless Apple device to control all of the important stuff in your home from anywhere in the world.

uCorder wearable camcorder
$90-$120

Tiny and convenient, the uCorder is a nifty little video camera small enough to actually carry around with you so you'll be ready to tape your next lecture, whale sighting or hilarious karaoke moment instead of just wishing you had brought your large clunker along. Measuring 3.5-inches tall, 1-inch wide and 0.5-inch thick, it's definitely one of the smallest video cameras around. It easily fits into a shirt pocket or clips to a lanyard and can even be pinned to clothing for your next bungee jump. Records in standard AVI or audio-only WAV file formats and available with 1 or 2 GB of memory.

Escort Entourage CIS powered by Blackline GPS
$399.95 + $14.95 monthly subscription fee

For the true car lover (and worrier-abouter), the Escort Entourage CIS is a satellite-capable tracking device that lets you get a handle on where your car is at all times, track it remotely online or on your smartphone, and eventually send the authorities out to recover it. Tamper-sensing technology will alert you by email and text message if your car gets broken into or stolen, and you can then track its location in real time on Google Maps or Microsoft Earth. Pretty nifty for also keeping tabs on where your teenage son is actually taking the car when he says he's heading to the movies — and you can even tell how fast the car is being driven. Turn it on or off using your own wireless key.



The Escort Entourage CIS powered by Blackline GPS is great for the true car lover.

The IlaDusk women's personal safety alarm is just $29.

For gals

IlaDusk women's personal safety alarm
$29

Named after the Sanskrit goddess of speech, this alarm emits a high-decibel, piercing female scream when activated that is loud enough to disorient an attacker and command the attention of anyone nearby, to help prevent a sexual assault. Unlike other alarms, this one is stylish and sleek when it attaches neatly to a keyring or clipped to the outside of a handbag, meaning women will be far more likely to have it at hand when needed — which can make all the difference.

For guys

Panasonic Pro-Curve 4-blade men's shaver
$399.99

For the guy who wants to pamper his face (and has the cash to do so), the Pro-Curve has four nano-technology shaped blades and can be used for wet or dry shaves with its wicked-fast 14,000 rpm motor. A built-in sonic vibration cleaning mode, pop-up trimmer, illuminated LCD screen, 45-minute continuous charge and ready for universal voltage (100-240V) no matter where you travel, despite the expense, it's hard to find a more capable and satisfying shaver.

The Panasonic Pro-Curve 4-blade men's shaver can be used for wet or dry shaves.

The uCorder wearable camcorder, below, is small enough to carry around with you.

Rockstar style
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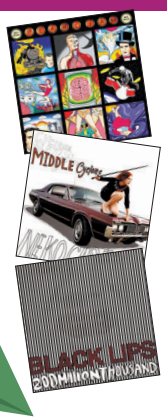


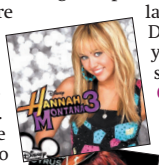
Music to their ears

KEITH CARMAN
for Metro Canada

Christmas shopping is fun but there's always the inevitable freak-out: What the heck am I gonna buy (Insert Name Here)? Luckily, you've got music on your side.

For many, music is actually at the top of their wish list. With others, it's a safe, keep-on-giving bet ... provided you know their aural tastes. Regardless, navigating music store shelves can be daunting, with the thousands of albums released this year. That's why we here at Metro have compiled what we believe to be some of the strongest releases of 2009. Hopefully they'll give you ideas and your beloved audiophile endless holiday cheer.

Bring your loved ones audio cheer.



Pop

Britney, Beyoncé and Pink released albums in 2008, so this year has seen more touring than new music from the major pop sensations. Still, one could do worse on the PG Richter scale than to pick up **Hannah Montana**'s latest album **3** (Walt Disney Records). If your kids prefer her sans a.k.a., **Miley Cyrus**' **The Time of Our Lives** (Hollywood) was noted as a strong affair, as was **The Jonas Brothers**' **Lines, Vines And Trying Times** (Hollywood).

Rock

For beneficiaries above driving age, surf the rock section. Back for another instalment of anthemnic radio tunes, **Bruce Springsteen** issued his 16th album **Working On A Dream** (Columbia), garnering a Number One slot on sales charts. Similarly, Irish rockers **U2** had their own chart-topper with 12th effort **No Line On The Horizon** (Interscope) and former grunge boys **Pearl Jam**'s ninth **Backspacer** (Monkeywrench) hit the mark as well.

Holding up the independent world, alt-country crooner **Neko Case**'s **Middle Cyclone** (Anti/Epitaph) simply rocked reviewers and public alike, whereas brash garage rock revivalists **The Black Lips** scored with **200 Million Thousand** (Vice).

Extreme

As for metal, did **Metallica**'s **Death Magnetic** (Elektra) reign supreme? Not exactly. It sold well, but in terms of value, rivals **Megadeth** out-metal their colleagues with **Endgame** (Roadrunner). Still, they're both no match for thrash metal giants **Slayer** and ravenous, could-scare-the-heck-out-of-Stephen-King affair **World Painted Blood** (American). Back home, Toronto-based outfit **Sacrifice** returned from a 15-year silence to woo head-bangers universally with their newest **The Ones I Condemn** (Sonic Unyon).

A heartbeat away from metal, punk was just as active this year. There were a plethora of great records, but Winnipeg's political activists **Propagandhi** particularly nailed us to the wall on **Supporting Caste** (G7 Welcoming Committee), a rousing blast of expedient music with intelligent messages. On the lighter end of the spectrum, renowned pop/punkers **Green Day** will bring smiles to the greenhorn/curious punk fans with their acclaimed rock opera **21st Century Breakdown** (Reprise).

Country

Is that special someone more line dance than head bang? No worries. Old country held its own this year: **Brooks & Dunn** (**Cowboy Town**, Arista Nashville), **Hank Williams Jr.** (**127 Rose Avenue**, Curb), **Rosanne Cash** (**The List**, Manhattan), **Randy Travis** (**Around The Bend**, Warner), **Reba McEntire** (**Keep On Loving You**, Starstruck) and **George Strait** (**Twang**, MCA Nashville) all released albums worthy of their legacies/kept up with the new country heroes who won't be mentioned here.

Box sets

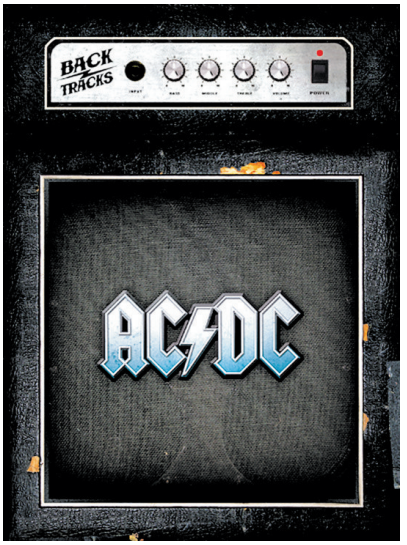
Something a little more glamorous is necessary? Fear not. 2009 has some of the greatest repackaging in history. Rockers will flip their wig (pun hopefully not intended) at Aussie mainstays **AC/DC**'s **Backtracks** (Columbia), a collection of album and live rarities spanning their 35-year career, housed in an amplifier-shaped case and boasting too many bonuses to comprehend.

A jaw-dropping "wow" is inevitable with indie rock founders **The Pixies**' debut box set **Minotaur** (4AD). It features 24K gold-plated CDs of their entire catalogue, video discs of performances and more. For the die-hard, a limited edition has all the music on vinyl, 72-page hardcover book and other bonuses housed in, get this, a custom clamshell.

Not to be outdone, **The Beatles** have their own collection for the discerning music fan this year. **Stereo Box Set** (Apple/EMI) finds the Fab Four in, well, stereo. Each of their 15 studio albums has been digitally re-mastered/packaged with album art, liner notes, rare photographs and short documentary films. If that's a bit much, no sweat. Re-mastered versions of each album will also be sold individually.

These are but a few examples of 2009's wonderful onslaught of music for all tastes.

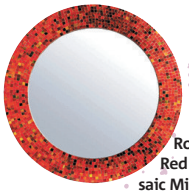
Rockers will flip at AC/DC's collection Backtracks.



Hours of fun
Star Wars fans will love this Play-Doh R2D2 playset, $22.99, which includes an Anakin book mould. Available at Walmart, Zellers and Toys R Us. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Winter wonderland



Round Red Mosaic Mirror, $99.95 at Pier 1 Imports. For more, go to pier1.ca.

Jewel detailed silk cushions, $49.99. Available at HomeSense. For more, go to homesense.ca.

Snowflake beaded stocking, $12.99, by PC Home. For more, go to superstore.ca.

Santa Floor Piece, $149 at Pier 1 Imports. For more, go to pier1.ca.

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Present Laughter by Noel Coward

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Hostess gift
This lantern is available at HomeSense for $49.99. For more, go to homesense.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

For tweens & teens

Quo Click on the Glitter, $20, allows you to mix and match to create glitter duos. Available at Shoppers Drug Mart. For more, go to shoppersdrugmart.ca.

Quo Rhinestone emery boards, $3 each at Shoppers Drug Mart. Comes in pink, gold, silver and black. For more, go to shoppersdrugmart.ca.

Pail of Polishes, $14.99, at Winners. For more, call 1-877-946-6877 or visit winners.ca.

Pandora's Box 4 Eye Shadow palette, $48, is available at Murale stores across Canada. For more, go to murale.ca.

Shimmer Gloss, $16 each, at the Body Shop. Available in Iced Candy and Iced Sparkle. For more, go to thebodyshop.ca.

My First Makeup Kit Deluxe Sampler, $41, includes Sephora's favourite beauty basics, such as Smashbox Lip Enhancing Gloss. Available at Sephora. For more, call 1-877-737-4672.

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Dress him up
Stainless steel cufflinks, $19, at Walmart. For more, go to walmart.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Soft & cuddly

Plush animals, $12 each at Bath & Body Works stores across Canada. For more, go to bathand body works .com.

What Christmas is all About Linus doll, $12.95. Press his foot and he says lines from A Charlie Brown Christmas. Available at Hallmark, hallmark.ca.

In the Night Garden talking plush dolls, $19.99 each. There's Igglepiggle, Makka Pakka, at right, and Upsy Daisy (not shown). Available at Walmart, Zellers and Toys R Us.

Where the Wild Things Are plush toy, from $11.99 for a 7-inch doll to $98.95 for a 24-inch doll. Available at Indigo and Chapters stores nationally.

Farmyard Skittles, $29 at shopunicef.ca.

FURREAL FRIENDS CUDDLE CHIMP
This realistic-looking chimpanzee loves to snuggle and cuddle; give him a hug and he hugs you back. He'll let you know he's ready for a hug by stretching out his arms.
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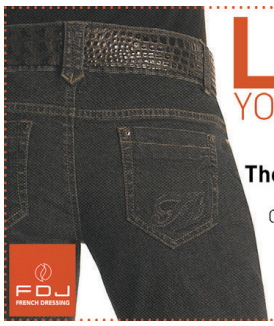
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Get tips on how to talk to your kids about gambling at knowyourlimit.ca.
Know your limit Play within it | knowyourlimit.ca
olg.ca OLG

For the TV lover
This World's Best Boss ornament, $22.98, is from the TV series The Office. See hallmark.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Comfy Christmas

Men's robe by George, $20-$30 at Walmart. For more, go to walmart.ca.

PJ sets, $19 each, by Joe Fresh Style. For more, go to joe.ca.

The Real Shaving Co. Mini Shave Kit, $5.99, at Shoppers Drug Mart. For more, go to shoppersdrugmart.ca.

Canvas shaving case with leather trim, $16.99, at Winners. For more, call 1-877-946-6877 or visit winners.ca.

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For the pony lover
My Little Pony's Pony Friends assortment, $7.99 each, includes Pinkie Pie, Rainbow Dash, Starsong, and more. Available at major retailers across Canada. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

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Stocking stuffers

Zoe & Zac braided wood pull-string bracelet, $10.99 at Payless. Available in select Payless stores across Canada. Go to canada.payless.com or call 1-877-474-6379 for more.

Olive necklace, $36, by Foxy Originals. Comes in aqua, white or black. Go to foxyoriginals.com for more.

Crystal and jet bead bracelet with chain detail, $25. Available at select Melanie Lyne stores. Go to melanielyne.com or call 1-877-973-6090 for more.

Heritage brooch, $105, by Swarovski. For more, go to swarovski.com.

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For the teacher
Teacher ornament, $12.99 at Hallmark. Inscription says, "Teachers help young minds grow." For more, go to hallmark.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Scent-sational

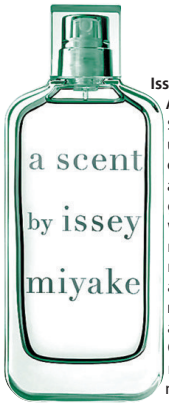
Viva Box Collector's Fragrance Sampler for Her, $45, includes seven samples of women's fragrances, such as Romance by Ralph Lauren and Stella by Stella McCartney. Available at Sephora. For more, call 1-877-737-4672.

Harajuku Lovers fragrances, $32 for 10 mL. These collectible eaux de toilette feature Love, Lil Angel, Music, Baby and G dressed like Snow Bunnies. Available for a limited time at Shoppers Drug Mart, Sears and drug stores across Canada. For more, go to HLfragrance.com or coty.com.

DAISY BY MARC JACOBS, EAU DE PARFUM SILVER EDITION
This floral scent has notes of strawberry, violet leaves, ruby red grapefruit, gardenia, violet petals, jasmine petals, musk, vanilla and white woods. Comes in a sleek silver bottle.
$102 for 100 mL
Available at department and select retail stores across Canada for a limited time only.
daisymarcjacobs.com

Cranberry LOVE Eau de toilette, $12 for 15 mL. Available at Fruits & Passion stores across Canada. For more, go to fruitspassion.com.

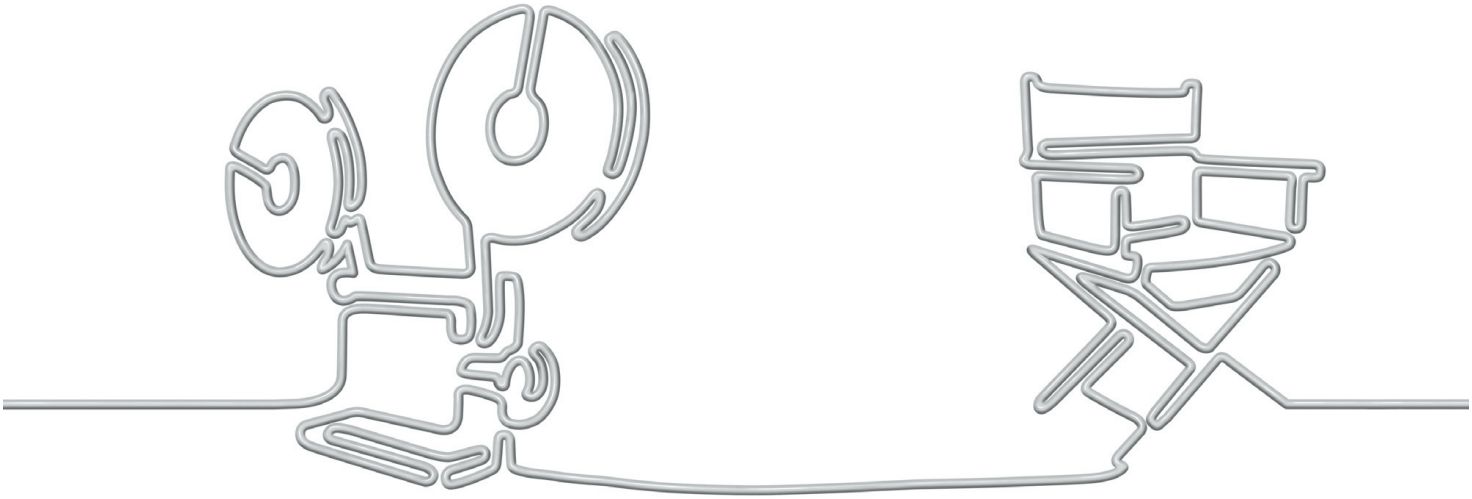
Fragrance sampler set, $70 at Shoppers Drug Mart. Includes 10 samples plus a gift certificate for a full-sized bottle of your choice. For more, go to shoppersdrugmart.ca.



Issey Miyake A Scent, $44-$150, uses notes of hyacinth and galbanum with verbena and jasmine. Available at Murale stores across Canada. For more, go to murale.ca.

Chloé Perfumed Bath Soap, $55 for a set of two, is available exclusively at Holt Renfrew stores across Canada. **Chloé eau de parfum intense,** $100-$125, is available at department and drug stores across Canada. Chloé also comes in an eau de toilette (available at Holt Renfrew, The Bay and drug stores across Canada) for $82-$100.

Signature Story by Victoria Beckham, $59 (50 mL) or $69 (75 mL). Available at drug and department stores across Canada.



Careful with treats near pets

Holiday treats could cause potential harm to your pets.

In a snapshot of a home decked out for a holiday celebration, trimmed trees adorned with lights and tables laden with treats are typically part of the scene.

But while festive decor and tantalizing edibles offers an undeniable feast for the senses, they may also serve as potential hazards to those of the four-legged variety.

Dr. Julie de Moissac, president of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, says a number of seasonal staples would be better kept away from the paws of pets as they could lead to possible illness — or worse.

Among them are table scraps, like chicken, turkey, bones and gravy, said the mixed animal practitioner.

"Often times, pet owners are really good about not doing that, but it's the relatives that come over and they see the poor dog and they think they're doing it a big favour by giving it little tidbits from the table," she said from Outlook, Sask. "Often times, they're too fatty for dogs and they cause stomach upset at best, or bone issues in the digestive tract would be the worst."

Chocolate can also be quite toxic to animals, she noted.

"That seems to be in abundance over the holidays and dogs love it and they will eat it if they have the opportunity, so you have to be quite careful."

Xylitol, a low-calorie artificial sweetener found in some baked goods, can lead to liver injury or sometimes liver failure, she said.

The CVMA also recommends keeping alcohol and bottles out of reach. Vomiting, wobbly gait, depression, disorientation and/or hypothermia are all signs of intoxication in pets. As for festive foliage, Christmas trees and their decorations can also pose hazards.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

THE MOST HD MOVIES

Grooming gifts for him

JANINE FALCON
for Metro Canada

Guys, don't even try to pretend you wouldn't appreciate quality grooming products as a gift — at least it would save you shopping for yourself.

Here's a round-up of great-hair and great-skin stuff to put on your holiday wish list. You know you want it.

Get your morning tingle here: **L'Oréal Professionnel Homme Energic Ice Mint + Ginseng Shampoo.** Wakey, wakey! Available for $14.50; go to loreal-professionnel.ca for salons.

We know you love a multi-tasker: **Fruits & Passion F/P Homme 003 Shower Gel Hair and Body** is a hair-to-toes deal. Available for $15 at Fruits & Passion boutiques.

The **Gillette Scrubber** is a manly shower puff so you can get your scrub on. Available for $4.99 at drugstores. For revved-up dry-skin sloughing, try the **Dermalogica Ultimate Buffing Cloth** with shower gel, then lotion up — no joke — within three minutes of towelling off. Available for $24; go to dermalogica.ca for retailers.

Toronto-based Bill Baker created organic skin and body care because his sensitive skin asked for it. His **Consonant Body Pure Unscented Organic Foaming Face Wash** and **Body Lotion** might answer your skin's call too. Available for $18 and $22 at The Bay, select Sears stores, and consonantbody.com.

Oxy Acne Fighting Face Formula Face Wash is part of a whole facial grooming line that helps put the kybosh on breakouts. Available for $11 at drug stores.

The Art of Shaving and Gillette teamed up to produce the high-end **Fusion Chrome Collection Power Razor**, with micro-pulse action for better glide and a spotlight to show up those hard-to-see spots. Available for $150 at Harry Rosen and Holt Renfrew.

More for your sensitive side: **Nivea for Men Easy Cross Shave Gel**, $6, and **La Roche-Posay XY Homme Anti-Redness Normalizing Balm**, $27. Both at drug stores.

With its sleek design, roller-ball tip and cooling formula, **Biotherm Homme High Recharge Yeux Anti-Fatigue Cold Eye-Serum** could be the easiest way to get a you to use an under-eye treatment — whaddya say? Available for $40 at drug stores.

That you've been buying **Neostrata Intense Daytime Total Anti-Age Complex SPF 15** for yourself means you've definitely learned something about effective anti-wrinkle skincare from swiping from your lady's stash. Props. Available for $84 at drug stores.

Good for your hair and environmentally responsible: **David Babaii for Wildaid Volcanic Ash Sculpting Clay**, $13 at Sears or DB4Wildaid.com.

EXCLUSIVE HD
ON DEMAND

Pamper her
This True Blue Spa Toe the Line gift box, $28, is sure to be a hit. Available at all Bath & Body Works stores across Canada. For more, go to bathandbodyworks.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Hot picks for high school kids

Nothing says Christmas with teenagers quite like the eye-roll as they open their presents.

High schoolers are a particularly difficult group to buy for, as their desires are often quite narrow and tied to their peer group. You're not just buying for them, but for their entire clique.

That Twilight edition Bella Swan doll ($139.99 US at FAO Schwarz) that might thrill your pop culturista will probably mortify your average environmental activist.

Here are some suggestions for negotiating this minefield:

SCI-FI GEEK: Star Wars hoodie by Marc Ecko. The hood zips up in front to form a helmet such as those worn by X-wing pilots in the movies. You'll get a "Roger, Rogue Leader" for making this $150 purchase at Shopecko.com

FASHIONISTA: On-The-Fold dress from Anthropologie, $188, matching cardigan $118. So tasteful you could eat them.

MALE JOCK: For the basketball player on your list, a new video The Decade of Excellence celebrates underdog favourite Gonzaga's amazing run of college basketball success. $20 at gozags.com.

FEMALE JOCK: Fitflops, shoes that provide a workout for legs while walking. $42 at Victoria's Secret.

ACTIVIST: Think globally but carry handbags made out of recycled candy wrappers, newspapers or subway maps. $28 at uncommon goods.

TECHIE: Oakley sunglasses with a built-in MP3 player, $51.99 at Amazon.com.

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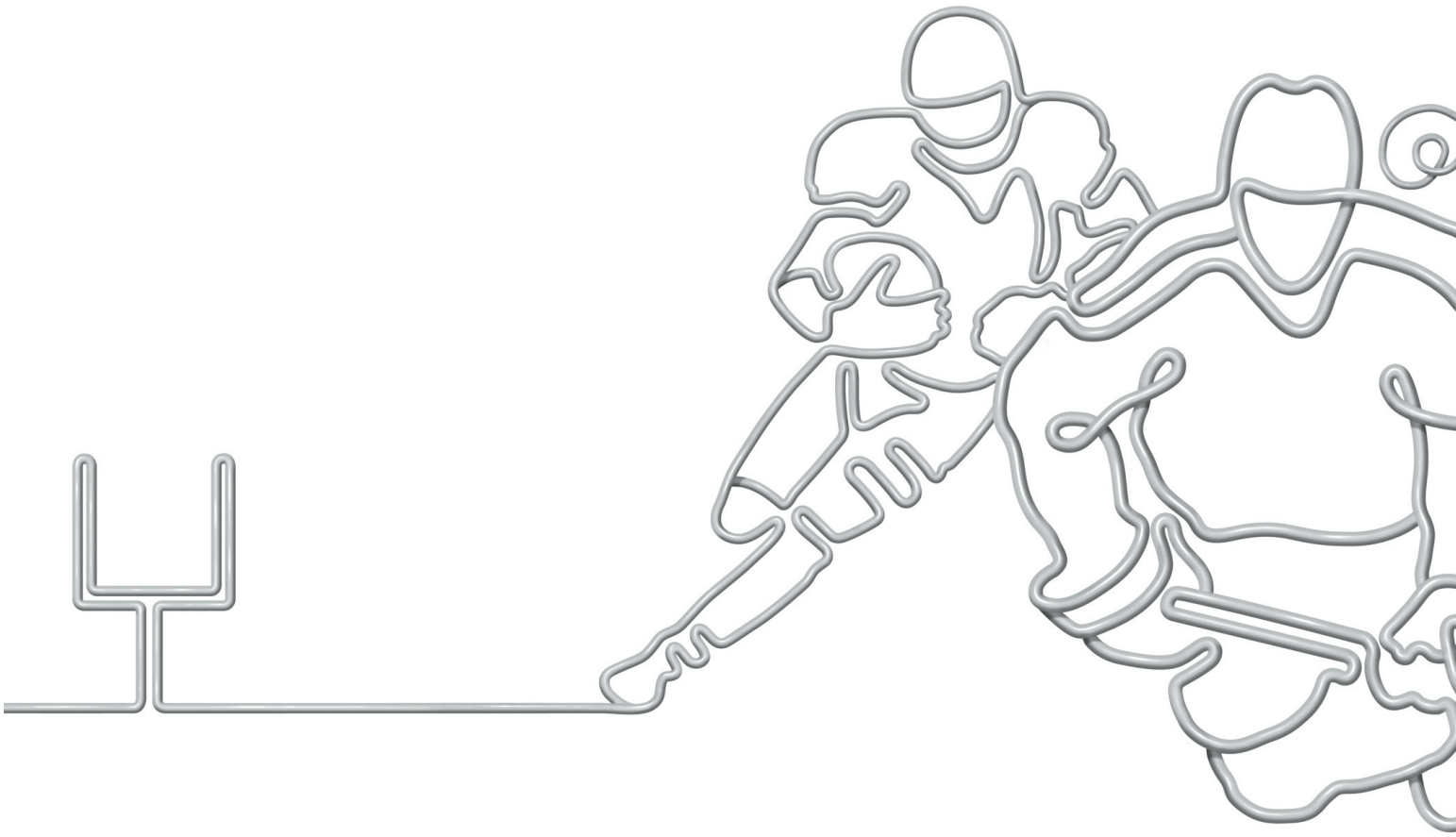


The Eco Christmas Gift Wrap has a small, lined pouch with a Velcro closure.

Handmade gift bags one-of-a-kind

Put down the tape dispenser and the wrapping paper.

Instead, make your own gift bags this holiday season. They can be done in a snap, and in their homemade splendour, they become part of the gift.

There's a gift bag for every sewing level; if you have sharp scissors and holiday-themed fabric, you're ready to go.

Non-sewers can turn to furoshiki, a Japanese term for a simple square of fabric into which nearly anything can be tied. Crafters who can sew a straight line may want to try a cinched gift bag, while more advanced sewers can tackle something like the eco-wrap pouch created by craft blogger Jessica Okui.

The cinched gift bag is a favourite of Shawn Whyte, of Helena, Mont., who got tired of the mess generated by paper gift bags and wrapping. She began folding fabric in half and sewing it up the sides, often with a drawstring or ribbon sewn inside. She's been whipping out these simple, colourfully patterned fabric bags for seven years, and throws nearly every gift into them.

Whyte learned a valuable lesson along the way.

"Initially, I put a lot of effort into the bag, as it was part of the gift. I would hem the edges, and do everything to make it look great," she says. "Then I cut myself some slack and figured out a way to whip them together — super simple, no fancy sewing.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

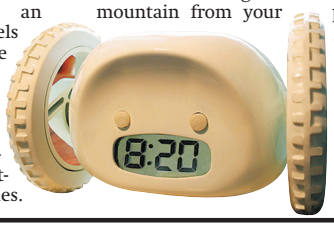
A furoshiki is a reusable, way to wrap holiday gifts.

Fashion-forward
Moxie Girlz Art-titude dolls, $14.99-$34.99, include accessories and clothing that girls can custom-design. Available at major retailers across Canada. METRO NEWS SERVICES

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

STUDENT LEADER: Future Tracy Flick can read Sarah Palin's book Going Rogue, $14.50 at Amazon.com.

SLACKER: Clocky, an alarm clock on wheels that will jump off the nightstand, drive away and keep ringing if the student does not get up right away. No more hitting the snooze button a dozen times.



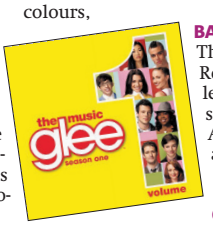
$49.99 at Target.

EXTREME ATHLETES: Tony Hawk RIDE, a motion-sensing skateboard deck for video games. Allows you to simulate shredding the mountain from your living room. $119 at Walmart.

GAMER: Subscription for a year of play on XBox Live, along with latest version of Call of Duty and headphones for directing your group's fire on all those Nazi zombies.

CHEERLEADERS: Tote bags that resemble a female torso, with "CHEER" written on the front, as if you couldn't already tell who the cheerleaders were. In various school colours, $24.95 at 4specialty-cheerleader.com.

THESPIANS: Gift certificate for professional headshots from local photo studio.



PREPPIES: Italian cashmere sweater in Heather Twilight or Heather Waterfall is available from J. Crew, $188.

BAND GEEKS: The Beatles: Rock Band will lend them some cool. Around $49 at many places.

GLEE CLUBBERS: Hit the high notes with Glee, the Music, Vol. 1, $12.99 on iTunes, or Glee, Season One, $49.99 on iTunes.

INVESTMENT CLUBBERS: Invest in their morals with books about swindler Bernie Madoff, including Erin Arvedlund's Too Good to Be True and Jerry Oppenheimer's Madoff With the Money.

SPICOLIS: Copy of Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE MOST HD SPORTS

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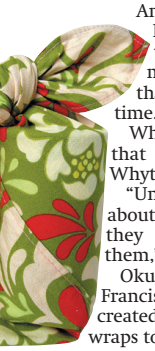


And guess what? People loved them just as much as the ones that took a lot of time."

What's amusing is that friends hoard Whyte's crafted bags. "Until people get about five from me, they won't reuse them," she says.

Okui, of the San Francisco Bay area, also created her fabric gift wraps to reduce the piles of crumpled gift paper on Christmas mornings. Her Eco Christmas Gift Wrap is a lined pouch perfect for smaller, more delicate gifts, or anything that needs special presentation.

"It's really not that difficult to make," says Okui. "I don't consider myself an advanced seamstress."

Instructions are available on her crafting blog site, Zakka Life (under the craft projects' "Christmas" category).

Okui also enjoys making the furoshiki, traditionally used in Japan to wrap anything from books to melons, throughout the year. "We use them more for potlucks to bring food," says Okui, adding that dinner hosts love receiving these simple wrapping cloths.

"It's something different," says Okui. "Anything that's different is going to appeal to someone."

Wrapping something in a furoshiki isn't always simple; there are more than a dozen ways to wrap objects, depending on whether you're wrapping a box or something more unusual, say, a fishing pole.

The government of Japan offers downloadable instructions for how to wrap a furoshiki 14 ways, at this PDF: env.go.jp/en/focus/attach/060403-5.html. Or search YouTube.com for video instructions.

Cindy Hopper, a craft blogger in Topeka, Kan., is an ardent furoshiki fan.

"I am totally taken with this method for wrapping gifts," Hopper says on her crafting blog, Skip To My Lou. "It is not only beautiful but also eco-friendly."

Hopper recommends the book Wrapagami (St. Martin's Griffin, 2009) for its beautifully photographed examples of furoshiki wrapping.

Lightweight fabrics, such as silk, work best for furoshikis, but Hopper says anything can be used, even burlap. Or go simpler and use a bandanna, large dinner napkin, scarf or scraps of old clothing.

She recommends starting with a 50-by-50-centimetre fabric square (the standard size is larger, 71-by-71 centimetres). Hem it — or don't. Fabric can be cut with pinking shears to limit unravelling.

You can make simple gift bags from colorful, holiday-themed fabric tied with ribbon.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

For the coffee lover
Starbucks Christmas Blend (a.k.a. Starbucks Holiday Blend) is available in 1 lb ($17.95) and 1/2 lb ($9.65) bags. Available at Starbucks locations across Canada. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Holiday Shopping Guide

Year's best in beauty gifts

JANINE FALCON
for Metro Canada

Smoother hair, stronger and longer lashes, brighter eyes, better skin — it's been a good beauty year.

Here's what's tops in 2009.

That what you consume can boost your beauty is a given, but busy lives and stress interfere with our good-eat intentions. **Genuine Health Healthy Skin Chocolate Soft Chews** ($24.99/45 pieces) and **GliSODin Skin Nutrients Advanced Daily Formula supplements** ($95/60 capsules) each significantly improves skin with nutrient-rich natural ingredients. For retailers, go to genuinehealth.com and glisodinskin.com.

The eco-responsible, silicone-free **Live Clean Exotic Nectar Moroccan Collection** strengthens hair and ramps up shine with argan oil and certified-organic olive and grapeseed oils. From $6.99 at Shoppers Drug Mart.

Also making silicone-free waves in fuzz-free hair care and styling, the key **Living Proof No Frizz** ingredient, PolyfluoroEster, improves hair's own frizz resistance, and repels surface water, oils and dirt so you shampoo less often. Formulas target fine-to-medium hair, medium-to-thick hair and thick-to-coarse hair. Available for $26 each at Sephora.

Another anti-frizz helping hand, the nubby micro-fibre **Hand Dry Hair Glove** sucks up moisture right quick to help shape smooth curls and waves sans blowdryer. Available for $22.95 per pair at delineation.ca.

The cleverly woven **Upper Canada Ultimate Body Sponge** shower puff has a loofah-style side to buff away dry skin. Available for $5 at tweedandhickory.com.

Dove Deep Moisture Nourishing Bodywash takes steps toward more natural beauty care with moisturizing ingredients such as natural stearic acid, soybean oil and glycerin. Available for $6.99 (354 mL) at drug stores.

Kiehl's Açai Damage-Repairing Skincare, the company's first 100 per cent natural-origin line, use the super-antioxidant organic açai berry to improve all aspects of the complexion. Available for $35 to $65 at Kiehl's boutiques; log on to kiehls.com for other retailers.

Lancôme Génifique Youth Activator Serum rewinds to less aged times by stimulating production of specific "youth proteins" to rejuvenate skin. Available for $92 at drug and department stores.

Sensitive types get another wrinkle-fighting option — and a Canadian one, too — in **Cliniderm Anti-Wrinkle Cream**, which uses non-irritating peptide technology to reverse signs of aging. Available for $50 at drug stores.

Physicians Formula continues to blaze the mass green trail with gentle and effective as well as biodegradeable **Organic Wear 100% Natural Origin Facial Makeup Remover Towelettes**. Available for $13.99 at Shoppers Drug Mart.

Oil-free cream-to-powder **Smashbox Camera Ready Full Coverage Foundation** contains silica beads to deliver a smooth, semi-matte finish that doesn't look heavy, and won't do the winter freeze-and-melt on your face. Available for $44 at Shoppers Drug Mart and Sephora.

Deep, dark under-eye circles have a new hide-'em hero with **Conceal FX Camouflage Concealer**, which has a little orange in the mix to temper shadows without looking ashy. Available for $27 at Shoppers Drug Mart and Sephora.

One of the biggest Google questions is, "What's the best makeup for my eye colour?" **L'Oréal Paris Wear Infinité Made for Me Naturals Eye Shadow Quads** ($10.95 each) and **CoverGirl Exact Eye Enhancers Shadows** ($6.99) join Almay and Physicians Formula with accessible and affordable palettes to spotlight your natural hue. Both are available at drug and mass retailers.

Joe Fresh Beauty may well be the most successful marriage of sophistication and affordability beauty junkies have seen so far. From $4; go to joe.ca for locations.

The luxuriously emollient **Yves Saint Laurent Gloss Volupté Sheer Sensual Gloss Stick** is the year's Most Coveted for beauty-addicts everywhere. Available for $35 at Holt Renfrew and The Bay flagship stores.

Accessible, eco-minded fragrance — how sweet the smell. Try these: **Roots Source Bamboo** or **Red Tea eau de parfum**, both formulated with corn-based alcohol ($35 for 30 mL at Roots stores); **Nautica Oceans** — it's for him — is biodegradeable and water-based ($57 for 50 mL at department stores); and **The Body Shop Love Etc.** is made with community-trade alcohol from organic sugar cane ($24 for 30 mL).

THE MOST HD VARIETY

Give green
This Solar Car, $34.99, zips around like a regular radio-controlled car but it's solar-powered. Available at Sears, sears.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Easy gift ideas for fussy foodies

Stymied by what to get the fussy foodie in your life?

Take this bit of advice — we all have more than enough aprons (kitschy, frilly, manly, profane and otherwise) that we don't wear; bottles of decorative vinegars consume valuable kitchen real estate and are so '90s; and with only two hands we can use only so many pot holders.

If you want to please a picky cook, look for gifts that solve problems and make work easier, or at least make it easier to love the work. Here are some suggestions that may make this year's holiday gift hunt a little less stressed.

HOST GIFT

When headed to someone's house for dinner, anyone can bring a bottle of wine or bouquet of flowers. To make an impression, head to the grocer and get a stalk of brussels sprouts, instead. A stalk of sprouts (usually 60 to 90 inches) has a rustic beauty and is easily dressed up with a ribbon or a wrap of tissue paper. The stalks are in season, cost just a few dollars and your host gets to eat the sprouts the next day.

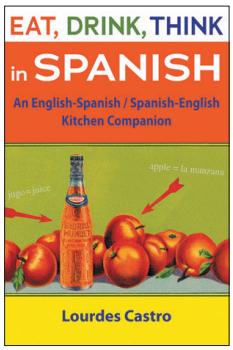
Sprouts not your thing? Form a large cone out of butcher's paper or heavy-duty wrapping paper. Fold and tape the bottom of the cone, then fill it with pecans and walnuts (in the shell). Top the nuts with a wedge of Parmesan cheese and a nut cracker.

STOCKING STUFFERS

For the foodie with a techie bent (and an iPhone or iTouch), consider getting an **iTunes gift card.** Sure, they can download some tunes to jam to while whipping up dinner, but there also are numerous apps that make cooking easier and more fun.

Spend some time searching iTunes and assemble a list of suggestions for your recipient. There are food and wine pairing apps, and recipe and grocery list options galore.

Hispanic food is where it's at, but if you don't speak the language, venturing beyond chain restaurant offerings can be intimidating. Which makes Lourdes Castro's new pocket-style dictionary, **Eat, Drink, Think in Spanish** (Ten Speed Press) so helpful.



Like most translation dictionaries, Castro's is divided into English-Spanish and Spanish-English sections. It will have your foodie navigating Hispanic markets with ease.

UTILITY OVER BEAUTY

Like measuring cups and wooden spoons, no kitchen can have enough towels. Skip the decorative ones found at most homes stores; they are pricey and not all that absorbent. So-called flour sack towels, the variety used in many professional kitchens, are a better choice. These thin but large cotton towels wipe clean and absorb well. They are available at a bargain price from many online retailers.

Most home cooks don't have good knives. And those who do often don't take proper care of them, which includes regular sharpening. Do you favourite cook a favour and get a gift certificate for knife sharpening. (Some hardware shops and many online specialty stores offer this service.)

Or give them a good knife. To give your foodie a real edge, check out the Miyabi line of Japanese-style knives from **Zwilling J.A. Henckels**. These ultra-sharp knives are beautifully balanced, hold their edge well and sport an unusually long but comfortable handle. Prices vary by style of knife.

FOR KIDS

Involve children in the kitchen by giving them their own knives at a very young age. Teaching children how to safely use a knife can be easy. For example, get them to follow this one simple rule: If one hand is on the knife, the other had to be at their side and off the cutting board. This makes it virtually impossible for kids to cut themselves.

This approach doesn't initially teach proper knife skills (having one hand at your side doesn't allow for holding the food being cut), but it fosters confidence working with knives and food.

If you are going to give a young child a knife, grip and length are important. Try the **Rachel Ray Furi Gusto Grip Li'l Edgy 5-Inch Santoku Knife**, which has a brightly coloured, sticky silicone grip. It's a good length and won't slip out of your child's hand.

Not ready to arm your toddler with a knife? There are plenty of working cooking sets and utensils marketed especially for children. **Playful Inc.'s Playful Chef Kit**, for example, includes a variety of kid-size tools, an apron and recipe cards colour-coded to the tools. The kits, available in two sizes, come in a backpack for storing the gear.

FOR BIG SPENDERS

Got a cook who simply must have the latest and greatest? Think they'd mind waiting until the day after Christmas?

Check out **All-Clad's** new line of stainless cookware. Called **Stainless with d5 Technology** (for the five layers of stainless steel and aluminum from which they are made), these heavy-duty pots and pans sport the usual solid All-Clad elegance.

Those five layers make for exceptionally even cooking. There was a noticeable improvement even over All-Clad's own earlier stainless steel cookware lines. The outer layer of steel also has been crafted to work with induction (magnetic) burners.

The pans are available from Williams-Sonoma. Expect to pay about $800 for a 10-piece set. Individual pans start at $99.95. But they won't be available until Dec. 26.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Deck your halls
These glass ornaments with embroidery detail are $5.99 each at HomeSense. For more, go to homesense.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Tips to avoid overdoing it

We've all been there: A friend, neighbour or colleague has one drink too many at a party and slides from tipsy into sloppy before your eyes. Or maybe you were the one who kept the gossips in business the next morning.

Staying on the right side of the bubbly, beer or cocktails during the stressful holiday season isn't as easy as munching a few hors d'oeuvres at the top of an evening, but it's doable with a little finesse — by the drinker and the host alike.

Understanding how the body processes alcohol is a good place to start. Ignoring wives' tales — such as coating your stomach with milk before drinking or thinking you can sober up with coffee — is another. Some advice:

DO THE MATH

Alcohol absorption and metabolism vary from person to person. Variables such as food in the stomach, body composition, body size, gender and medications are all important in how a person responds to alcohol.

Consider this example: A one-ounce shot of 80-proof distilled spirits (bourbon, rum, gin, vodka, whiskey and many liqueurs) will produce in the average 150-pound man a blood alcohol concentration of about .02 per cent. In a smaller drinker, say 120 pounds, the same amount would likely produce an alcohol concentration at or near .03 per cent. For comparison's sake, the limit for drivers to be considered legally drunk is .08 in most places.

The liver can metabolize only a certain amount of alcohol per hour, allowing it to accumulate in the bloodstream when consumed quickly, so having only one drink per hour could help you keep pace. In these supersize-me times, a drinker must also be aware of how much alcohol is in each glass since a well-meaning host or bartender may be pouring extra-large drinks without actually measuring.

A regular-size drink usually refers to one, 12-ounce beer, five ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits. The body would need two to three hours to break down those amounts, says Kim Galeaz, a registered dietitian and consultant to the food and beverage industry.

Try these tricks

- Monitor your motor skills as an indicator of intoxication by moving around at a party or in a bar rather than sitting in one place.
- Try putting a drink down on a table or bar between sips to slow down consumption to no more than one or two drinks per hour. More than five drinks of any alcoholic beverage in an evening is probably too many. Keep count.
- Avoid drinking alcohol as a thirst quencher. It's not a good one. Intersperse alcoholic drinks with glasses of water to stay hydrated, especially when consuming salty or dry foods.
- Knocking back a stiff drink to stay warm while carolling or during other winter activities is a misconception. Alcohol tends to increase your body's heat loss, making you more susceptible to cold.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Party hosts looking to avoid drunken guests should circulate more than just a few nibbles throughout the evening.

EAT UP

Recent studies have cast doubt on certain foods having more impact than others on slowing alcohol absorption, says Carlton Erickson, director of the Addiction Science Research Education Center and a professor of pharmacology at the University of Texas at Austin.

"As long as you're eating and drinking at the same time, that's the important thing," he says.

Without food in the stomach to slow absorption, alcohol travels quickly through the small intestine and into the bloodstream. With food, the process is slowed: "It's not the food absorbing the alcohol. It's the slowness of the stomach emptying."

Party hosts looking to avoid drunken guests should circulate more than just a few nibbles throughout the evening rather than relegating the nosh to remote tables or running out of food early as alcohol continues to flow.

Tim Laird, chief entertaining officer for Brown-Forman Corp., which produces Jack Daniel's and Woodford Reserve, among several other wines and spirits, recommends self-serve food stations scattered around a party room stocked with mini sandwiches of beef or pork tenderloin, along with Bruschetta, cheese and cracker platters, fresh cut vegetables and dips, mini baked potatoes topped with caviar and easy-to-grab desserts such as bars and brownies.

But food is no magic bullet: A drinker with a full stomach might consume too much alcohol in a short period believing it isn't having an effect, only to learn otherwise once the food passes through the intestine.

THEN EASE UP

Laird, who has been in the hospitality industry for more than 20 years, also suggests a signature drink with a similar, alcohol-free sister served in the same glasses with identical garnishes so guests feel a part of things without pressure.

"As Champagne is a popular drink for the holidays, I set out a sparkling station that has numerous fruit juices where guests can mix their own sparklers," he said. "I have club and lemon lime soda also available. Alcohol-free mixers help dilute the drinks as well." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Some hints for first-time holiday dinner hosts

Remember to honour important or fun family traditions; If you want to do something new, introduce it along with the more traditional aspects. If you are cooking, stick to the tried and true. Don't choose this time to try out a new recipe. SYLVIA PUTZ/FOR METRO CANADA

Metro Homes

Dinner decor

Only decorate your home for your Christmas dinner in a few key places. To minimize work, stick to visible areas, like the mantel above the fireplace, stair railings, and the Christmas tree. —SYLVIA PUTZ

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

A decade of changing decor

Homes go practical and casual in 2000s

Goodbye to the armoire and the dining room (in many cases, the living room, too). Hello to the home office.

Repurposed rooms, recycled materials and an increasingly relaxed decorating style characterize the end of a decade that began as a party on a grand scale.

These are among the home decor trends cited by experts as the 2000s draws to a close.

Over the past 10 years, the formal living room in most homes has been reinvented — it's now a library, workspace, perhaps a music or game room.

The most well-liked rooms now are the home office, mud room and media room, the survey indicated. What we don't want so much anymore? Three-car garages, guest rooms and formal living rooms.

Seen here are some of the trends that came and went (or stayed) this decade.

Some trends over the past 10 years:

Living large

At the start of the 2000s, many jumped on the real estate thrill ride. McMansions, gobblers of space and energy dollars, became ubiquitous. Now, we're rethinking how we live, says Jennifer Boles, founder of The Peak of Chic design blog and contributing editor to House Beautiful. Oversize furniture like sectionals and big coffee tables, popular at the start of the decade, are scaled down.

However, one oversize space remains popular: "The spa bathroom is the new two-car garage — a must-have if you ever want to sell your home," says Homegoods' Philip Tracey.

"The spa bathroom is the new two-car garage — a must-have if you ever want to sell your home."
Homegoods' Philip Tracey

Living al fresco

"The outdoor room's really been one of the biggest changes. Everyone has an outdoor space now, even if it's tiny," says Elle Decor's Cheminne Taylor-Smith. "With seating, dining, even kitchens and sleeping pieces, these rooms are treated like their indoor counterparts."

Living green

After a long fallow period, gardening took off in the past few years. From containers to victory gardens, we've got our hands back in the dirt. We're concerned about the provenance of produce, and about our carbon footprint. We're putting down less pesticide. More of us are composting.

Living creatively

Americans are spending about $260 billion US a year on home improvement projects, according to the Housing Industry Research Council. That's up about $90 billion from 2000. Empowered by informative blogs, magazines and TV shows, the DIY boom continues.

With more creative freedom now to express our personalities at home, the world became our inspirational marketplace.

Living relaxed

We've loosened up. It's OK to have the computer and TV in the heart of the home. There's been a shift toward a more practical, casual lifestyle. As designer Mark Hampton says, "Real comfort, visual and physical, is vital to every room."

Suites of furniture? Passe. Untouchable formal rooms? Over. We're comfortable mixing and matching

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Other hallmarks

- Stainless steel appliances, granite counters, mid-century modern furniture, media furniture, home theatres, Craftsman style, ottomans, wallpaper, cherry cabinetry, low-profile home entertainment systems (flat screens, mini speakers), less-is-more window treatments, high pigment one-coat paints.

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"John has a good knowledge of the Real Estate market."

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Debbie Belair
"Debbie will find you a great mortgage on your terms."

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Lessen your Christmas dinner hosting stress

HomeScape

Planning is key to getting your holiday dinner off without a hitch.

Hosting Christmas or holiday dinner for the first time can be a terrifying prospect to newbies. Heck, even if you've done it before, the notion can make you weak in the knees!

It is, after all, not to be taken lightly. It is an event, a marathon to some. But it doesn't have to be.

First of all, realize the whole affair can be very stressful, so take the time to make it as easy as possible. Even now, mere days before the event, take the time and plan out the event. To help you plan effectively, here are some points to consider:

- Finalize the number of guests that you will have, and decide how much you want to spend.
- This will lead you easily into a decision on how you will serve your meal — formal, buffet, sit-down casual or an eat-around-the-house kind of dinner.
- From there, decide on the logistics. How many chairs do you need? Is the table large enough? Etc.
- Are you planning a potluck? If you are entertaining a large group, a potluck may save you. If you decide on a potluck, plan your menu and ask guests to bring a particular category of food, such as a salad or appetizer.
- Do not hesitate to ask for help. Ask your sister-in-law to help you decorate your house in style. Phone your brother to help you move furniture. Enlist the family teenagers to do cleanup duty. Designate a turkey carver.
- If needed, order the foods now that you may not find later in the week, such as a honey-roasted ham or fresh turkey. If you are ordering in, plan the menu and order the food.
- About a week ahead of time, start shopping for the non-perishable items you need, like mineral water, alcoholic drinks, coffee, tea, plastic containers for leftovers and so on.
- Finalize the menu and shop for perishable items a few days before. Cook ahead as much as possible. Complete last-minute cleaning and decorating, such as preparing a simple centerpiece for the table, perhaps with coloured balls and a glass vase.
- On the day, finish your preparations in the kitchen, set out the table, and hop into the shower. Then deck yourself out in your best holiday gear, put on the Christmas music, and have a drink. Enjoy that peaceful moment, because you'll soon be engulfed in Christmas cheer. Whew!
- Above all, remember to have a great holiday!

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

Esprit's celebrity campaign
Esprit's spring/summer 2010 campaign will feature Daisy Lowe, daughter of vocalist Pearl Lowe and Bush front man Gavin Rossdale as well as model Julia Restoin-Roitfeld, the daughter of Carine Roitfeld, editor-in-chief of French Vogue. METRO NEWS SERVICE

Style

Moore models for Bulgari

With four Oscar nominations to her name, Julianne Moore can now add jewelry model to her already-impressive resume. The famous redhead will appear in Bulgari's spring/summer 2010 jewelry and watch advertising campaign. Shot by famed photographers Mert Alas and Marcus Piggot in a Beverly Hills house, Julianne models 115-carat Colombian teardrop emerald earrings, Serpenti snake bracelets and the label's new "Chandra" bag in chestnut and Prussian blue leather, according to Bulgari. PEOPLE.COM

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

It'll be a *blue* 2010

Pantone picks turquoise as next year's hottest shade

If colour is any guide, we'll be moving into vacation mode in 2010 with the world awash in tropical turquoise, forecasters say.

Turquoise was selected as the colour of 2010 by Pantone, a company that supplies and tracks colour for fashion and home decor, among other industries. Fashion insiders agreed the colour is on the rise.

"Turquoise is universally appealing. It puts everyone in the same state of mind — on vacation," says Jane Schoenborn, design director at Lilly Pulitzer. "Turquoise for us is a really big colour. A lot of times it's transporting, whether you're actually going to a resort destination or not."

Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, says there was no runner-up to turquoise in her mind because people crave escapism and freshness after a tough year. The shade is on the cusp of blue and green, which makes it both inviting and serene — characteristics associated with blues — and invigorating and luminous, which comes from green, she says.

"Transporting" was a word many used for turquoise, a shade that takes designer Tommy Hilfiger to the beach, especially the Caribbean, St. Tropez, France, or Southern California, which served as the inspiration for his newest collection. In jewelry, he thinks of the American Southwest, or Central or South America.

"The women in my life wear it on vacation and it looks great with a suntan at the beach," Hilfiger says.

Pantone's colour for 2009 was mimosa yellow, intended to carry a hopeful, optimistic message. Eiseman says the public is shifting gears as the economy shows some improvement: They are ready to fantasize a bit about the beach resort.

She also notes that in many cultures turquoise is considered a protective colour with people wearing the blue-stone jewelry almost as a talisman. "You often hear it attached to words like 'healing.'"

But Hilfiger urges a little caution in wearing it. "I love it for women and I strongly dislike it for men."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ABOVE: Three-row, two tone encased geometric stone stretch cuff ($29.95). Available at Le Chateau stores.

LEFT: Jacquard sparkle pashmina ($22). Le Chateau stores.

Springtime cruise bracelet ($50) and necklace ($65). Available at Banana Republic.

RIGHT: Striped shirt ($33.99). Available at talbots.com.

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Gyllenhaal and Witherspoon could be done
The rumours appear to be true. Jake Gyllenhaal and Reese Witherspoon are no longer together, according to Gossip Cop, a Web site dedicated to confirming or debunking tabloid tales. METRO WORLD NEWS

Entertainment

Wedding bells?
Joshua Jackson is ready to settle down with long-term girlfriend Diane Kruger and can see himself marrying the German beauty. Jackson, 31, has been dating the Inglourious Basterds actress since 2006. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

⊕⊕⊕⊕⊕ A CLASSIC; ⊕⊕⊕⊕ EXCELLENT; ⊕⊕⊕ GOOD; ⊕⊕ FAIR; ⊕ POOR

Keys keeps getting better

Jimmy Buffett, Timbaland among other new releases

Alicia Keys

Album: The Element of Freedom **Label:** J/Sony Music
Rating: ⊕⊕⊕⊕

IF THERE'S ONE musician other artists should envy it's Alicia Keys. She's easily one of the most talented artists around, and continues to improve with every record. Her latest is an intensely passionate record about broken hearts, loneliness and finding strength. It might be a bit preachy, but with solid songwriting — the soaring Love is Blind is one of her most infectious tunes yet — blaring pipes and top notch piano playing, she's still far ahead of her peers.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Jimmy Buffett

Album: Buffett Hotel
Label: Mailboat/Fontana North
Rating: ⊕⊕⊕

THIS IS AN impossible record to dislike, especially for the legions of Parrotheads out there. Buffett's songwriting craft has lost none of its ability to go to the places that mean most to his fans and veering somewhat left of mid-life crisis. His wry wit shines though on A Lot to Drink About, a Buffett state-of-the-world address. He boils things down to essentials on Surfing in a Hurricane and Beautiful Swimmers. And when he reverts to cover other artists, he picks only the best — Bruce Cockburn (Life Short Call Now) and Jesse Winchester (Rhumba Man). Still, it's not going to win him over many new fans.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

AlbumReviews
music@metronews.ca

Robin Thicke

Album: Sex Therapy: The Session **Label:** Universal
Rating: ⊕⊕½

UNTIL NOW, ROBIN Thicke has managed to create some of the most inoffensive, yet still welcoming R&B sounds. His music was always nice, something you could play in front of your parents. His latest however, is all about doin' it. That would be all well and good if the music was as reliable as his past efforts. Songs like Make U Love Me, a stripped down, electro-tinged club track with the line "Mr. Big is in your hands" is nauseating, while It's The Mornin' or rather "sex in the morning" as he sings, is too R. Kelly for its own good.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

GETTY IMAGES

Alicia Keys sings about broken hearts, loneliness and finding strength on The Element of Freedom.

Timbaland

Album: Shock Value II
Label: Interscope/Universal
Rating: ⊕⊕⊕

THE TIMBALAND SOUND has dominated pop music for the past five years. Now, frankly, we're getting a bit tired of it. Tim sticks to the same formula of synthetic clapbeats backing occasional flights of melody and autotone-tainted vocals from a revolving cast of A-list pop stars. Justin Timberlake and Nelly Furtado are back, sounding pretty much like all the other Timbaland stuff they've done, except without the hit potential. New dalliances with Katy Perry and Miley Cyrus would be forgettable if there was anything worth remembering about them. The interesting tracks here are the ones backed by Timbaland's little brother, rapper Sebastian, and Canadian singer Esthero. Still, it's hard to imagine this Timbaland sound continuing into the next decade without radical revision.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

Animal Collective

Album: Fall Be Kind
Label: Domino
Rating: ⊕⊕⊕

ANIMAL COLLECTIVE IS now sampling the Grateful Dead (Unbroken Chain from Mars Hotel), which just goes to show ... all good drugs lead to the same place. The problem is that nods to classics like the Dead or acid-era Beach Boys only serve as reminders that the best psychedelic music is more than just collages of freaky sounds. Melody remains important as does poetic imagery. Sound effects should be in the background, keeping you wondering whether they're really there or not. Animal Collective chooses to push them into the foreground, leaving only remnants of the melodic patterns and choral flourishes that we know are there, somewhere. But, man, these sounds sure are freaky.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

Gucci Mane

Album: The State vs. Radric Davis **Label:** Warner
Rating: ⊕⊕⊕½

AS WE ALL know too well, being a rap star doesn't preclude one from a jail sentence. While Gucci Mane did beat a murder charge, he's now back in prison for violating parole. Luckily, he can stay in the spotlight with his new, and damn good, album. The appropriately titled The State vs. Radric Davis (his given name) is a pure southern rap disc. It's slow, plodding and chunky, just how a solid Atlanta hip-hop album should sound. And with a plethora of guest stars — Usher and Lil Wayne — his fans will no doubt wait for him.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

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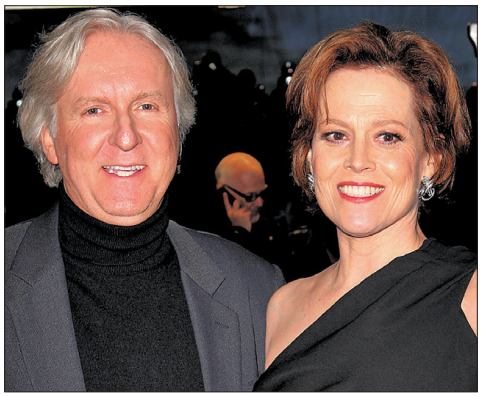
Not a hobbit

Tobey Maguire is not appearing in The Hobbit. The actor has dispelled rumours he has signed up to play Bilbo Baggins in the upcoming movie adaptation of the prequel to the Lord of the Rings trilogy. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Aliens from another planet

Weaver explores a very different role in Avatar from Aliens

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News



Director James Cameron and actress Sigourney Weaver arrive at the premiere of the film Avatar

Sigourney Weaver admits her role as Dr. Grace Augustine in James Cameron's long-awaited movie Avatar was something new for her.

"It was wonderful to play someone who ends up finding her true happiness and her true home in an alien life, especially after my history with aliens," the veteran actress says with a laugh.

Weaver's Dr. Augustine serves as part of a team of humans studying the Na'vi, an indigenous people on an alien planet whose home just happens to rest over a mother lode of minerals earth needs to fix its energy crisis.

And Weaver relished the chance to play a professional woman as complex as Grace.

"Grace was a wonderful combination of qualities. She's full of authority and wit, but she's also a very conflicted person," Weaver explains.

"I admire women who've devoted themselves to the study of certain things or certain causes."

Teaming up again with Cameron, who helped cement Weaver's status as a science-fiction icon in Aliens, was a simple decision to make.

"There are a lot of big movies that involve special effects," she says.

"Jim Cameron is the only one I know who understands that special effects are not for effect.

"He uses them to enhance the emotional story and to make even sharper — in this case through 3-D — the sensory experience of the audience experiencing the story."

Given the environmental thrust of the story in Avatar, Weaver admits there could have been a better place to premiere it other than London — such as the U.N. Climate Change Conference happening at the same time in Denmark.

"I'm sorry that we didn't show this at the kick-off of Copenhagen," Weaver says, though she thinks a younger audience will have greater effect.

"You know what I think is going to work? A lot of families will see this movie, and they'll talk about the message. "I think children will hold us to this because they know this is the world they're inheriting. I'm cautiously optimistic."

Avatar opens in theatres tomorrow

YouTube's top hits of the year

Susan Boyle

ONLINE The eclectic cast of characters starring in YouTube's most-watched videos of 2009 served as a reminder of the quirky appeal of a website that accepts about 20 hours of new video every minute.

YouTube's 2009 star was Susan Boyle, the frumpy Scottish woman who mesmerized the world with a heartwarming rendition of I Dreamed A Dream on Britain's Got Talent, attracting more than 120 million views worldwide.

The second spot, with more than 37 million views, was held by David After Dentist, which featured a seven-year-old boy recovering from some dental work that left him feeling disoriented and wondering if he would ever feel normal again..

Third place went to JK Wedding Entrance Dance, which captured an elaborate routine orchestrated by Jill Peterson and Kevin Heinz just before their July marriage.

It attracted more than 33 million views and turned into a prime example of YouTube's moneymaking potential after Sony claimed its rights to a Chris Brown song, Forever, that provided the dance's soundtrack. A link placed by the video helped drive more sales of the song.

Commercials rounded out YouTube's top five videos for the year. A movie trailer for The Twilight Saga: New Moon attracted 31 million views.

Evian water soaked up 27 million views clips featuring diaper-wearing babies performing roller-skating stunts.

YouTube compiled a separate list of the year's most popular studio-produced music videos. Rapper Pitbull's I Know You Want Me was the category's top draw with more than 82 million views. Michael Jackson's Beat It logged more than 25 million views.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

OT	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 12/17/09	265	353	2	TVO	We Built This City		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Sunshine (N)		Masterworks		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Survivor: Samoa (N)		Family Guy	Family Guy	90210		News Final
	-	-	5	SRC	Comme par magie (SC)		Les Années Derome (N) (SC)		3600 secondes d'extase (SC)		Le Téléjournal Nouvelles. (SC)		La Zone (SC)
	209	342	6	CHRO	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	Grey's Anatomy (HDTV)		Fringe (HDTV)		Stargate Atlantis		Comedy Now
	196	311	7	CTV	etalk	Access H.	Criminal Minds (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		The Mentalist (HDTV) (N)		CTV News
	208	303	8	CBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	*Miracle on 34th Street* ★★★ (1994, Fantasy)				CBC News: The National		The Hour
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Saturday Night Live Presents: A Very Gilly Christmas				The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	117	713	10	TVA	Clodine		*Table pour trois* ★★ (2007, Drame) Catherine Zeta-Jones.				TVA nouvelles	(10:45) Juste pour rire (SC)	
	-	-	11	QS	Smile TV (N)	Criss Angel	*De retour pour Noël* (2006, Drame) Linda Hamilton. (N)				Guerre clans	L'Attaque à 5 (N)	
	137	763	12	TFO	Panorama		Y paraît que...	Volt	*Cadet d'eau douce* ★★★ (1928, Comédie)			Villages	Tout simple
	-	362	13	CBS	The Insider (N)	Judge-Brown	Survivor: Samoa (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		The Mentalist (HDTV) (N)		Two/Half Men
	216	395	14	OMN2	Family Guy	The Simpsons	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King/Queens	Cold Case
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Scrubs	Better Off Ted	30 Rock	30 Rock	The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Office	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere V	Omni News:	Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Metropia
	218	345	18	CHCH	*Holiday Inn* ★★★ (1942, Musical Comedy) Bing Crosby.				*Wayne's World 2* ★★ (1993, Comedy) Mike Myers.				News at 11 (N)
	-	361	20	ABC	Action News	Entertainment	Grey's Anatomy (HDTV)		Grey's Anatomy (HDTV)		(10:01) Private Practice		News
	512	396	24	CPAC	(3) Dossier public (SC)		Heure polit.	L'Heure politique				Tête-à-tête	Podium
	651	355	25	CTS	Little House on the Prairie		Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman		100 Huntley Street		Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee
	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	Bones (HDTV PA)		Fringe (HDTV)		FOX 2 News (N)		News
	-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Garden Home	Manor Born	Time Goes By	Murdoch Mysteries		Poirot		Charlie Rose
	205	312	104	CTV	etalk	Access H.	Criminal Minds (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigat'n		The Mentalist (HDTV) (N)		CTV News
news	502	390	26	NW	Connect Today's biggest stories. (N)				CBC News: The National		The Nature of Things		National
	500	500	33	CNN	CNN Tonight (N)		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
sports	406	417	27	net	MMA Conn	Sportsnet Con.	NFL Football Indianapolis Colts at Jacksonville Jaguars. (HDTV) (Live)						
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI économie	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	400	280	30	TSN	NHL Hockey Minnesota Wild at Montreal Canadiens. (HDTV) (Live)					NHL Hockey Los Angeles Kings at Calgary Flames.			
	410	403	52	SCR	Score on NFL	Score Today	FullTiltPoker.net Million		Poker Asian Pacific Tour.		Score Now	NBA Basketball	
	411	457	56	OLN	Ghost Hunters		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Ghost Hunters		Bounty Hunter
	417	406	59	SC	Pass Time	Pass Time	Pinks – All Out (HDTV)		Pinks Outtakes	Jacked!	Wrecked	Wrecked	Pass Time
family	554	544	48	TEL	Little Spirit	*Bah, Humduck! Looney Tunes*		6TEEN	Futurama	King of the Hill	*V for Vendetta* ★★★ (2006, Action)		
	557	540	51	FAM	Sonny Chance	Zack & Cody	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
	551	542	65	YTV	Legend of Frosty		Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz	Prank Patrol	Adrenaline Proj
cable variety	570	580	29	MM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		The Beatles on Record		Entourage	Wild 'n Out	mmtop10.ca
	615	520	31	A&E	Criminal Minds (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 "Ditched"		The First 48
	628	584	32	SPKE	UFC Fight Night (HDTV)				TNA Wrestling (HDTV) (N)				Unleashed
	521	560	34	TLC	BBQ Pitmasters (HDTV)		American Chopper		American Chopper (N)		BBQ Pitmasters (N)		Amer. Chopper
	145	761	35	TV5	Hawaiki nui va'a		Club social		Envoyé spécial			Cité guide	TV5 Le Journal
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		Da Vinci's City Hall		Found.	Paradise Falls	Bones		NCIS
	620	523	40	BVO	Storytellers	PhotoXplorers	Bathroom Divas-Opera Star		*A Winter Tale* (2007, Drama) Peter Bailey.				Law & Order
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet (N)		Crashes That Changed Flying		Crashes That Changed Flying		MythBusters		Daily Planet
	575	583	43	CMT	Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Carrie Underwood: An All-Star Holiday Special (N)				Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Christmas
	601	562	45	SLC	Rich Bride, Poor Bride		X-Weighted "Analisa"		X-Weighted Dancer.		X-Weighted		ET Canada
	625	548	46	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Hot Box	Jon Dore Show	Daily Show
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	Law & Order: SVU		*Laws of Attraction* ★★ (2004)		
	600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Holmes Inspection		Renovation	Renovation	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis	(DVS)	Star Trek: Voyager		*Copperhead* (2008, Suspense) Brad Johnson.				InnerSpace (N)
	581	566	53	MTV	Super Sweet	After	Real World-Road Rules		Real World-Road Rules		Jersey Shore (N)		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	The Outer Limits		ET Canada	TV Made, Do It	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld
	522	506	55	HIS	Ice Road Truckers		Ancient Discoveries		Underworld Histories		Life After People		Beaver
	129	773	60	CD	Biographies (HDTV)		Victimes		Eaux troubles du crime (HDTV)		Un tueur si proche (HDTV)		Vidéo
	261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote		On the Buses	'Allo, 'Allo!	*The Nativity Story* ★★ (2006, Drama) Keisha Castle-Hughes.				Charlotte
	602	567	62	W	*Crazy for Christmas* (2005, Drama) Andrea Roth.				*Borrowed Hearts* (1997, Drama) Roma Downey.				Maxed Out
	269	350	70	APTN	Wapos Bay	By the Rapids	Big Bear	Moose TV	*Big Spender* (2003, Drama) Casper Van Dien, Corinne Conley.				Fish Out
	621	527	71	TLK	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (N)		TMZ
	603	561	95	FN	Ricardo	Road Grill	Restaurant Makeover		In Search of Perfection		Ace of Cakes	Ace of Cakes	Disney Holiday

critics'corner

Grey's Anatomy

Members of the hospital staff continue to explore unique ways to deal with their grief over George's death. Arizona (Jessica Capshaw) stoops to manipulation to diagnose her pain patient. Hunt's (Kevin McKidd) amputee patient sinks deep into depression in "Goodbye." Ellen Pompeo, Sandra Oh, Katherine Heigl, Justin Chambers and Chandra Wilson also star. 8 PM on 20 ABC, 6 SHRO

Saturday Night Live Christmas 2009

But will they remember to include the Coneheads and the Loopners? This new two-hour yuletide special, culled from holiday-themed sketches over the show's past 35 years, presents the ones judged to deliver the biggest number of ho-ho-hos. Your mileage may vary, but some real gems are sure to make the cut. 8 PM on 9 NBC

Polanski decision in the new year

WILL HE STAY OR WILL HE GO? Use Swiss authorities say they will decide early next year whether to extradite director Roman Polanski to the United States.

Justice Ministry spokesman Folco Galli says officials are studying a U.S. extradition request for having sex in 1977 with a 13-year-old girl.

Jonas Bro to make musical magic

ALL BY MYSELF Nick Jonas' new band, Nick Jonas&The Administration, is getting ready to perform as the house band for the Critics' Choice Movie Awards on Jan. 15 in Los Angeles. The band will be expected to not only entertain but also keep the pace of the show moving. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenya's Style

Kenya Hunt

Read the blog at metronews.ca/kenyasstyle

For complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and tickets, visit: metronews.ca/movies

A cocktail for everyone
For those who want to try their hand at cocktails this holiday season and beyond, Difford's Encyclopedia of Cocktails, 2600 Recipes (Firefly, hardcover, $45) is a great book to help you learn the basics and master the craft. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Urban Foodie

●●●●● INSPIRED; ●●●● VERY GOOD; ●●● PALATABLE; ●● HO-HUM; ● NEVER AGAIN

A simple touch of Paris in the market

SHARI GOODMAN
OttawaUrbanFoodie@gmail.com

Benny's Bistro
119 Murray St.
bennysbistro.ca
(613) 789-6797

Rating: ●●●●
Dinner & drinks for 2: $50

Tucked away behind the kitchen of The French Baker is a touch of Paris in Benny's Bistro. Its unpretentious and humble surroundings throw the spotlight on the surprisingly delightful and delicious food.

Decisions are difficult when perusing their eclectic menu. I settled on the special sandwich of the day with a side of soup ($13). What arrived was salmon belly impeccably cooked and hidden with slightly spicy chili aioli, spongy avocado and crunchy Lebanese cucumber set between freshly-baked nine-grain bread: the perfect sandwich. On the side, was a soup (so thick it formed peaks) of celeriac, leek and bacon purée, all components sharing their flavors amiably.

On the web

- Get recipes and more great food content at metronews.ca/recipes

On another visit, I ordered the mushroom and leek confit with Belgian endive and shaved butternut squash drizzled with lemon and truffled white balsamic vinaigrette ($15). Every bite was filled with textural contrast and layers of flavor, all working together to create the perfect bite. It was so delicious that the din around me went quiet, and all I could focus on was the explosion of flavours in my mouth.

Dessert choices arrived on a tray instead of a menu, each one calling out to me. I pointed to the dense lemon tart. It was both sweet and sour with a swirl of caramel garnished around it. A sip of suitably strong coffee rounded out this tasty lunch.

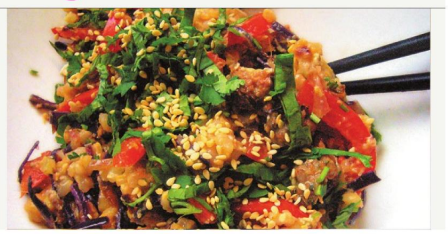
DON CHOW/FOR METRO OTTAWA

Mushroom and leek confit with Belgian endive and shaved butternut squash ($15).

I only wish this sweet market bistro were open for dinner.

Global Peasant blog online

- Travel along with Diane Thompson's culinary adventures in her Global Peasant blog.
- Check out metronews.ca/globalpeasant for a recipe of Stir Fried Rice-O-Rama.



Dining out

CAFÉ PARADISO
Enjoy food, wine and live jazz at Café Paradiso. They offer tapas and a large selection of wines by the glass. Tonight, listen to Elise Letourneau and Tim Bedner perform standards from the 1960s, '70s, '80s and '90s. $5 entertainment charge for non-diners. 199 Bank St. (613) 565-0657

PIZ'ZA-ZA
Fine Italian cuisine and wines are served up at Piz'za-za, including a daily table d'hôte (soup or salad, and pizza of the day) for less than $12. Watch for its monthly wine theme evenings. 36 Laval St., (Old Hull) Gatineau. Call (819) 771-0565

In brief

WATCH AND TASTE Thai vegetarian cooking including spring rolls, pad thai and hot and sour soup tonight at The Chinese Cooking Studio from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. $55 per person. chinesecookingstudio.com

TASTE fine chocolate at a foodie demo this Saturday at Mrs. McGarrigle's in Merrickville from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. mustard.ca

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Promenades de l'Outaouais
Rideau Centre
St. Laurent Centre
Belleville
Quinte Mall
Kingston
Cataraqui Town Centre

(1) See store for details. Bonus gift available with new activations only. While quantities last. (2) Subject to approved credit.

Breaking news: Rich celebrities spend loads of money on expensive Christmas gifts

Keith Urban was spotted picking holiday gifts for his wife Nicole Kidman at London's Harvey Nichols department store. He spent time at the By Kilian counter, selecting four perfumes, including the Absinthe Verte, people.com reports. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Madge lends Guy kids for holidays

THE GRINCH WHO RETURNED CHRISTMAS Guy Ritchie is overjoyed to be spending Christmas Day with his children, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Sherlock Holmes director — who has nine-year-old son Rocco and adopted Malawian son David Banda with singer Madonna — is going all out to make the day "traditional" and special for the youngsters after his ex-wife gave permission for them to spend the day at his home.

A source said: "Guy is really pleased, and cannot quite believe he and Madonna came to such an amicable arrangement. He is a huge fan of Christmas and wants to do everything by the book, very traditionally."

The British filmmaker is so determined to make the day memorable, he has promised to rustle up a delicious roast turkey lunch with all the trimmings and "spoil them rotten."

The source explained to the Daily Mirror newspaper: "This means stockings hanging from under the kids' beds, presents under the tree and a massive turkey, Brussels sprouts, chestnuts, the works.

"When Guy and Madonna were together they didn't really celebrate Christmas Day due to Madonna's staunch Kabbalah beliefs. Now that he's a single man, Guy is determined to spoil them rotten and give the youngsters a Christmas they'll never forget."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Courtney's custody saga continues

MONEY CAN'T BUY YOU LOVE Courtney Love's lawyer says the singer losing custody of her daughter, Frances Bean Cobain, has nothing to do with drugs, insisting Love has "been clean for years," according to Newser.

"Frances is 17 and a strong-willed child, and this is a decision she made on her own." Meanwhile, Love took to her Facebook page to slam her daughter in a series of posts that have since been deleted, according to Perez Hilton, writing that her daughter "was deceptive" and "thinks she has all this money. The point is I have all the money she has." Love insists Hilton made up the post in question.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Lohan gets a legal scolding from LA judge

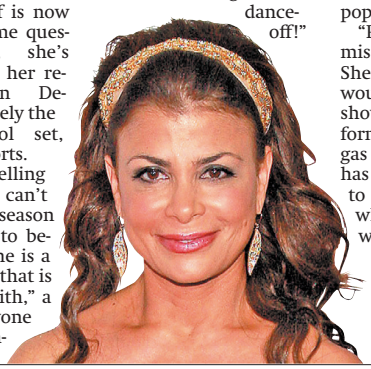
HE HAS THE LOHANS ON SPEED DIAL A judge in Los Angeles is laying down the law with Lindsay Lohan, insisting the troubled actress complete her court-ordered alcohol education classes before the three-year probation from her 2007 DUI conviction expires next July, according to Hollyscoop. Lohan was accused of violating the terms of her probation by only attending 15 of 26 alcohol classes and 13 of 28 self-help sessions.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Paula's Idol regrets

STRAIGHT DOWN To everyone who asked, "Why in the world would Paula Abdul quit American Idol?" a few months ago, it seems that Abdul herself is now pondering the same question. Word is, she's bummed out and her replacement, Ellen DeGeneres, is absolutely the talk of the Idol set, popeater.com reports.

DeGeneres is telling friends that she can't wait for the new season of American Idol to begin in January. "She is a breath of fresh air that is so easy to work with," a friend says. "Everyone in front of the cameras and behind all adore her, particularly 'Mr. Mean,' Simon Cowell, who Ellen has already challanged to a dance-off!"



Meanwhile, as life couldn't be better for DeGeneres, Abdul finally realizes what a mistake it was to quit the show, popeater.com says.

"Paula was full of optimism when she left Idol. She was confident she would get her own talk show and even a gig performing live on the Las Vegas strip — none of which has materialized. It's going to get worse in January when Idol is everywhere with Ellen sitting in her seat," a worried friend of Paula's tell me,"

METRO WORLD NEWS

Kidman shuts down reporter's Scientology probe

HER CONTRACT'S NOT UP YET In an interview with BBC personality Andrew Marr, Nicole Kidman refused to talk about Scientology when asked about the controversial religion.

"One of the thing, you haven't talked about before ... Scientology, it is, a lot of people would say, a bullying cult," Marr said to Kidman.

"I'm here to publicize Nine," Kidman responded.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Celebrity tweets

Richard Branson is attacking the issues, Lindsay Lohan doesn't like running into her past, the lights are on outside but not on the inside at Jessica Simpson's house, and teenage singer Justin Bieber will not be tied down.

• @richardbranson Good meetings in Copenhagen with mayors of LA, Calgary and Vancouver. Forest talks now. Lots of opportunities for Carbon War Room.

• @lindsaylohan go away ex

• @JessicaSimpson I have so many christmas lights outside that now my inside lights won't stay on! Ha!! Electricians are in and out of my house today.

• @justinbieber the reporter asked me is i was dating. i said i go out on dates. but nothing serious. im still single and ready to mingle. haha.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Was Kate's behaviour behind A-Rod breakup?

DIAMOND DIVA Kate Hudson's desire for exposure was behind her split from Alex Rodriguez, at least according to one of his friends. "She would always want to be styled before games and she'd insist on front-row seats," the source tells Us Weekly.

"It was a turnoff to have a girlfriend who always wanted to be on camera. Alex wanted someone who was more interested in building a long-term relationship than just building their profile."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Pregnant Coppola plays Bach for baby

MY PARENTS PLAYED CYNDI LAUPER AND NOW I WRITE CELEBRITY BUZZ Director Sofia Coppola and partner Thomas Mars, the frontman for the band Phoenix, are expecting their second child, people.com has confirmed.

In a backstage interview with Chicago's WXRT, the French-born musician, seemingly surprised, nodded affirmatively when asked about partner Coppola being pregnant

Coppola, 38, and Mars have been together for four years, and have a three-year-old daughter, Romy. Coppola was previously married to director Spike Jonze. "I heard the story that if you play Bach, babies in the womb get smarter," Mars said.

METRO WORLD NEWS

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SUNDAY DECEMBER 13 & 20 11:00am to 4:00pm
ADDITIONAL HOURS DECEMBER 21,22 & 23 3:00pm to 8:00pm

EXTENDED SHOPPING HOURS
Begins Wednesday December 9, 2009
Monday to Friday 9:30am to 9:00pm
Saturday 9:30am to 6:00pm
Sunday 11:00am to 5:00pm
Thurs. December 24th 9:30am to 5:00pm
The Mall will be CLOSED December 25 & 26
Thurs. December 31 9:30am to 5:00pm

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FRAMEWAVE
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L'IMAGE HAIR STUDIO
LOTTA LOTTO
MARIANNE'S LINGERIE
MARY'S FASHIONS
MONKEY JOE'S
NATURAL FOOD PANTRY
NETTLETON'S JEWELLERY
OBENTO ASIAN CUISINE
PET VALUE
POST OFFICE (in SHOPPERS)
REEBOK OUTLET
REITMAN'S
ROCKIN' JOHNNY'S DINER
ROYAL BANK
SATCHELS
SECOND CUP
SHOPPERS DRUG MART
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WINE RACK

The Weather Network
TWN incorporates MSC data
Today Mainly sunny -13°/ -18°
Friday Partly cloudy -14° / -16°
Saturday Cloudy -11°/ -15°
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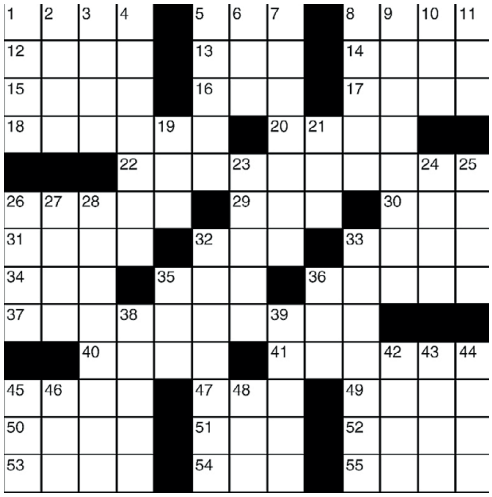
Take Five



ACROSS

1 Cold War weapon, for short
5 Rotating part
8 Undermines
12 Garment of India
13 — Khan
14 Hodgepodge
15 Lendl or Pavlov
16 Rocky peak
17 Island guitars
18 Recipient
20 McGwire rival
22 "Going Rogue" memoirist
26 "Spirit of '76" musician
29 Snitch
30 "— not choose to run"
31 Lummox
32 "You've got mail" co.
33 Dandling site
34 Pac. counterpart
35 Mrs. McKinley
36 "He's — nowhere man"
37 Any of three of this puzzle's answers
40 Jab
41 Top
45 Sketch
47 Singer Cole
49 Waikiki wingding
50 Meditative exercises
51 Accom-plished
52 "— It Roman-tic?"
53 Paradise
54 Commotion
55 "Untouchables" role

DOWN

1 Wife of Osiris
2 Grotto
3 Cereal choice
4 Mental attitude
5 Bring the food
6 In bygone times
7 Sheriff
8 March King
9 High-pH
10 Dessert choice
11 "Help!"
19 Listener
21 Make up your mind
23 Bellowing
24 Concept
25 Yule refrain
26 Envelope part
27 Greek vowel
28 Maximal, as a magazine ad
32 Book supplement
33 Russian citadel
35 Tattooist's supply
36 Rock concert need
38 Hawkeye
39 Surpass
42 English river
43 Without
44 Sounds of disapproval
45 Turn blue?
46 Scepter
48 Answer 11-Down

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

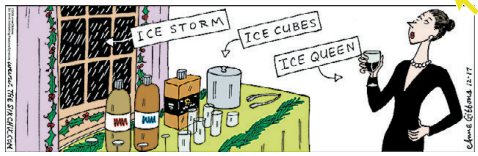
	5		6		7		2	
2								6
		4	9		2	7		
	4		5	7	9		8	
	9						1	
	6		4	8	1		7	
		1	7		6	9		
8								3
	2		3		8		4	

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

1	4	5	9	6	8	3	7	2
3	7	9	1	2	5	4	6	8
2	6	8	3	7	4	1	9	5
7	9	2	5	4	3	6	8	1
5	8	4	6	1	2	7	3	9
6	3	1	8	9	7	5	2	4
9	2	6	7	5	1	8	4	3
4	5	3	2	8	6	9	1	7
8	1	7	4	3	9	2	5	6

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day

Leek & Mushroom Strudel

Submitted by:
Nicole Paara, Toronto, ON

INGREDIENTS:

2 Tablespoon butter
3 Cup chopped leeks (1 bunch)
500 Gram mixed mushrooms, trimmed and sliced
2 Teaspoon chopped garlic
1/4 Cup whipping cream
1/4 Cup fresh breadcrumbs
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1/2 Cup grated manchego or parmesan cheese
1 Package puff pastry, de-frosted
8 Ounce goat cheese, crumbled
1 egg yolk
2 Tablespoon whipping cream

METHOD:

1. Preheat oven to 400 F°.
2. Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add leeks and sauté for 2 minutes or until beginning to soften.
3. Add mushrooms and garlic and sauté for 4 minutes longer, or until mushrooms are soft.
4. Add cream and cook for 30 seconds or until cream just coats vegetables.
5. Stir in breadcrumbs and grated cheese. Season with salt and pepper.
6. Divide pastry in half and roll out each piece to a 10 x 10-inch square and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
7. Cover half of each square with goat cheese, leaving a 1-inch border around the edges. Top with vegetable mixture.
8. Beat together egg yolk and whipping cream for glaze and brush over pastry edges. Fold pastry over vegetables to cover. Press edges together to seal and brush top with glaze. Slash top of pastry at 2 inch intervals leaving a 2-inch border on each side.
9. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until pastry is golden and filling is hot.

SERVES 6-8
PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES
COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
A wonderful link from Venus to your ruler Mars urges you to put fun and pleasure before chores and responsibilities.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Forget about cash flow issues and focus on something that brings a smile to your face. It's time to get your life back in perspective

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
You need to be on the move as much as possible today because the more people you meet the more opportunities will come your way

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Others may say you are behaving in an illogical manner but don't let that change the way you go about things today.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
With Mars in your sign aligned with Venus, planet of harmony, you won't have to do anything too energetic today.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
If you admit you need help today you will be overwhelmed by offers of assistance.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Friendship and love are especially well starred at the moment and a new relationship is likely to begin either today or tomorrow.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
Go out of your way to be nice to people today, even people who have not always been nice to you in the past.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
Your adventurous spirit will find its perfect outlet today and, even better, you will share the fun with like-minded people.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
The intensity of your emotions will catch you by surprise today — so imagine how other people will feel!

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
You will find it easier than usual to admit that you were at least partly to blame for things that have gone wrong,

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
You may find it hard to make up your mind about something today but maybe that's not such a bad thing.

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TICO

This day in history

1718 – Great Britain declares war on Spain.
1862 – American Civil War: General Ulysses S. Grant issues General Order No. 11, expelling Jews from Tennessee, Mississippi, and Kentucky.
1903 – The Wright Brothers make their first powered and heavier-than-air flight in the Wright Flyer at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.
1989 – Pilot episode of The Simpsons airs in the United States
2005 – Anti-WTO protesters riot in Wan Chai, Hong Kong

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LT model shown with team Canada Edition Package††

HWY: 5.4L/100KM – 52 MPG
CITY: 8.0L/100KM – 35 MPG[Δ]

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CASH PURCHASE PRICE	$15,995	$15,849***	$15,990***
AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION	Standard	Optional	Optional
HEAD CURTAIN SIDE IMPACT AIRBAGS	Standard	Not Available	Standard
AIR CONDITIONING	Standard	Optional	Optional
16" ALUMINUM WHEELS	Standard	15" Steel	15" Steel
REMOTE KEYLESS ENTRY	Standard	Not Available	Not Available
POWER DOOR LOCKS	Standard	Standard	Not Available
HP / TORQUE	155/150	138/136	140/128
POWERTRAIN WARRANTY	5-year/160,000 km	5-year/100,000 km	5-year/100,000 km

WITH More than $3,000 in additional features than Hyundai or Honda**

**Value of additional features based on dealer pricing. Vehicle comparison is based on 2010 Cobalt LT (1AL69/1AL37 1SA + MX0), 2010 Civic DX Sedan (FA1E2AEX) and 2010 Elantra L Sedan (D4T). ***Vehicle specification and purchase price (including freight) according to the information available on the manufacturer's website at time of printing.

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CITY: 7.9L/100KM – 36 MPG[Δ]

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